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THE CHURCH
AND THE HYMN WRITERS

THE CHURCH AND THE HYMN WRITERS

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BY

G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D.

AUTHOR OF
"THE ADULT SCHOOL MOVEMENT," "INSPIRATION IN MEN, BOOKS, AND MOVEMENTS"; EDITOR OF "PROVERBS," ETC., IN CENTURY BIBLE, ETC.

Cumque offerrentur holocausta, cœperunt laudes canere Domino.
2 CHRON. xxix. 27.

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"THE LIVING CHURCH" SERIES

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PREFACE

The study of hymns has been a delightful occupation of leisure hours with the present writer during nearly forty years. He has often felt that, in addition to the many excellent books existing on the general subject of the literary history of hymns, place might be found for a book that dealt with them as illustrative of the various developments of Christian doctrine, and as reflecting the changing emphasis from generation to generation upon certain aspects and presentations of the Church's creed. For the opportunity of attempting this task he desires to express his thanks to the Editor of the present series, and to his friend, R. H. Coates, M.A., to whose suggestion the present book is primarily due. The author is well aware that much larger space would be requisite for a thorough treatment of the subject, but will be satisfied if this little volume opens a new field of study and inquiry to many who may be better able to carry it farther, and who will doubtless find in it a field of interesting and profitable investigation.

Hymns can often reach hearts that sermons and learned treatises on theology frequently fail to influence. As Pippa says:

"No doubt, some way or other, hymns say right."

Their limitations and defects will be traced in the following pages, but every student of the subject must become growingly conscious of the wonderful treasure-house of devotion and inspiration—often

too little appreciated—which the total sum of the Church's Books of Praise affords.

The author owes debts to many writers, some of whose names will be found in the following pages, and to many friends whom, throughout the years, he has consulted and with whom he has discussed many problems, but in particular he desires most warmly to thank his friend, F. J. Gillman, who has done such excellent service as a writer on hymnology and as editor of one of the best modern hymn-books, and who has carefully read the manuscript of this book and made many valuable suggestions. He also wishes to express his gratitude to his wife for her invaluable assistance as amanuensis; and to his friend G. Peverett for expert help in proof reading.

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LONDON
Whit Sunday, 1928

G. CURRIE MARTIN

THE CHURCH AND THE HYMN WRITERS

CHAPTER I

THE GREAT INHERITANCE

The Jew, at all events the pious and well-educated Jew, has every right to be a very proud man. He has seen in the case of his own people an event happen that has never occurred elsewhere in the history of the world. The hymn-book of the Jewish temple has become the hymn-book of the human race, in so far as the human race has been affected by Christianity. There are scarcely any languages in the world in which some version of the Hebrew Psalter does not exist, and everywhere that we find Christian worship an established order, there we discover the old Hebrew worship-songs forming part of the Church's ritual.

As we proceed with the story of the Church's Song we shall find occasions in its history in which nothing else save the Hebrew Psalter was made the vehicle of the Church's praise. But very much more frequently shall we find the Hebrew terms interpreted afresh, and so altered as to fit the faith, which was born of Judaism indeed, but destroyed in the end the Mother that gave it birth. We can take as a simple and clear example two famous versions of the twenty-third psalm. The first is

that which occurs in the Scottish Psalter, and which has been dear to Scotsmen for generations, and now finds its place in many hymn-books. No doubt the worshippers who sing it generally conceive the language as applying to that Good Shepherd whom the New Testament reveals to them, but the language itself is perfectly representative of the Hebrew thought and expression that Jahweh was the guide and shepherd of His people.

The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green : He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.
My soul He doth restore again ;
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
Ev'n for His own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill :
For Thou art with me ; and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still.
My table Thou hast furnished
In presence of my foes ;
My head Thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me :
And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be.

In comparison with this let us examine the well-known paraphrase of the same psalm by H. W. Baker,

which has become one of the most favourite hymns in modern hymn-books :

The King of love my Shepherd is
Whose goodness faileth never ;
I nothing lack, if I am His
And he is mine, for ever.

Where streams of living water flow
My ransomed soul He leadeth,
And, where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me,
And on His shoulder gently laid,
And home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me ;
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
Thy Cross before to guide me.

Thou spread'st a table in my sight,
Thy unction grace bestoweth ;
And O what transport of delight
From Thy pure chalice floweth !

And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never ;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house for ever !

In this second version we can see at a glance that the whole psalm is given a direct reference to Christ.

The cross is an addition to the rod and staff of the original, and this word alone transfers the poem from the atmosphere of Hebrew religion to that of the Christian Church. Again, the fifth verse has a distinct reference to the Sacrament, and the cup and the oil of the original become symbols of a later and different doctrine.

The primary question for consideration is in what ways the Hebrew Psalter passed on definite doctrine to the Christian Church which might be properly and permanently accepted by it, as part of its own teaching.

What the late Professor A. B. Davidson said remains eminently true: "The Psalter lives in virtue of its unique religious power and beauty." [1] Had this inherent religious life not been present in the Psalms, they would never have survived, either in the service of the synagogue, or in that of the Christian Church. The great authority on Hebrew literature whom we have just quoted says in the same discussion: "The varied metaphors of the Psalms have furnished religious life with brightness and picturesque variety for more than two thousand years. The terebinth planted by the streams, the hind panting for the water brooks, the sun going out like a bridegroom from his chamber, the Divine Shepherd tending His flock alike in the pleasant pasture and the lonely and gloomy ravine—these familiar images are not more striking than the thousand less noticed pictures, sketched in outline only; the crowned and anointed guest at the banquet of life spread in the very wilderness amongst foes;

[1] A. B. Davidson: *Psalms, Book of*, in H.D.B., vol. iv., p. 156.

the harassed and overthrown forces of the enemy scattered over hill-side and plain, like the ten thousand flakes 'when it snoweth in Zalmon'; or Death the shepherd herding among his flock in Sheol those who had arrogantly defied his power—yet the psalmist knows of a mightier Shepherd still, Who shall 'redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me'." [1]

The beauty of this language and of many other expressions contained in the Psalter have become the very texture of poetry in many languages influenced by these Hebrew originals. But more important than the forms of speech are the ideas which these forms convey. To quote Dr. Davidson again: "The chief service which the Psalms have rendered to the religion of the world is the preservation of the idea of the living God, without any impairing of His absolute and inconceivable glory." [2]

To the writers of the Psalms God was not only infinite power and wisdom, but also a Person Who loved and cared for His children. As, for example, in the words of the hundred and third psalm, quoting from the Scottish version:

The Lord our God is merciful,
And He is gracious,
Long-suffering, and slow to wrath,
In mercy plenteous.

Such pity as a father hath
Unto his children dear;

[1] Ibid. [2] Loc. cit., p. 157.

Like pity shews the Lord to such
As worship Him in fear.

The holiness and the power of God are continually insisted upon, as such a psalm as the ninety-ninth makes abundantly manifest. Another of the great features of the Psalms is their intimate and thorough knowledge of the human heart. "No wonder," says Sir George Adam Smith, "that the psalm-book of that little Hebrew people should have become the confessional of half mankind." [1]

The Psalms that were termed by the Mediæval Church the "penitential" psalms have formed the basis of many hymns of confession, but have never themselves been surpassed for the depth of their contrition and the sincerity of their thought. We may name them here lest our readers may not have them accurately in mind. Those that were so termed were Psalms vi, xxxii, xxxviii, li, cii, cxxx, and cxliii. These were the Psalms which Augustine ordered to be written out and placed near his bed as he lay dying, in order that his eyes and heart might always be filled with their language. And our own poet, Edmund Spenser, prepared a version of them which has unfortunately perished.

The psalmists were not only men who confessed their sin, but also men who were not ashamed to utter their confident trust in God and in the righteousness of character which God's grace had enabled them to maintain. Such Psalms as vii, xviii, and ci are examples of this mood. They also have been followed by subsequent hymn writers,

[1] *The Legacy of Israel*, p. 23.

and the thought that they express has frequently occurred in the verses of later writers. Many of the more virile of modern hymns are based on this same consciousness, but seldom has the mood found finer utterance than in Sir Henry Wotton's hymn written in the seventeenth century:

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill;

Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of His grace than goods to lend;
And walks with man, from day to day,
As with a brother and a friend.[1]

This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall,
Lord of himself, though not of lands,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

In the Psalms we notice at times a strongly national feeling. The people are united to God

[1] This is the form that usually appears in hymn-books, but the original verse runs:

Who God doth late and early pray
More of his grace then gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a Religious Book or Friend."

by the bond of a covenant, and on this the psalmists frequently rely, and of this they joyfully sing. On the good side it is the spirit of such psalms that has given rise to the best patriotic hymns of later times, alike in the chastened spirit of Kipling's famous *Recessional* and in the more triumphant note of Adler's *Sing We of the Golden City*. The extreme national attitude gives rise to the so-called "imprecatory" psalms, whose evil effect upon subsequent history we shall have occasion to note in a later section.

The Psalms, in common with the rest of the Old Testament, show as a rule no hope of life after death, and hence their writers' attitude towards the future is one of gloom and despair. This has had its effect, sometimes unconsciously, upon many hymn writers. But there is one glorious exception in the hundred and thirty-ninth psalm, where the writer declares :

If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there :
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ;
Even there shall Thy hand lead me,
And Thy right hand shall hold me.

The frankness of the Psalter, as Sir George Adam Smith has pointed out, is one of its greatest values. Men have bared their hearts in these songs, which throb at times with passionate penitence and at other moments with exultant joy in their own righteousness, or in the assurance that God will not

forsake them, and that their enemies must, in the long run, be overwhelmed. In this school the hymn writers of later days learned their lessons, and we shall discover an ever-growing tendency to disclose the secrets of the human heart, sometimes with too morbid a consciousness, in the verses that her poets have given to the Church.

The great glory of Hebrew religion culminated in the consciousness of the Mighty Deliverer, Whom they called the Messiah, and the psalmists naturally join in His praise. Among the so-called Messianic Psalms are ii, viii, xvi, xlv, lxxii, lxxxix, and cx. The language of these psalms is frequently applied naturally, if incorrectly, to Christ, and may be said to be the type upon which the great hymns in His praise have been written. A noteworthy example is Montgomery's

Hail to the Lord's Anointed;
Great David's greater Son;
Hail in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free;
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.

"The Psalms," to quote Sir George Adam Smith again, "are full of a natural sympathy with the forces and beauties of God's world, and of the free enjoyment of all that is stored therein for the use of man. To creation they resort, sometimes to feel her streams and cataracts loosening the floods of

their own gathered memories and regrets; sometimes to lift their eyes above all the littleness and despair of life to the horizons of new hope, the thresholds of coming salvation, which her hills present to their imagination; sometimes to draw peace to their hearts from her order and calm; sometimes to exult in her stormy energies and clamours, and to bring the swell and gladness of all her music into their praise of her Creator. How frank is their joyful acceptance of the boons, pleasures, and fruits of physical life: fertile fields and flocks; corn and oil and wine, fatness, fragrance, and richness of colour; the vigour and litheness of the body, fair faces, strong arms, and nimble feet; the fruitfulness of marriage and the joy of children!" [1]

Such thoughts of the psalmists are found reflected in many hymns. Three notable examples may be here cited: Milton's splendid paraphrase of Psalm cxxxvi:

> Let us with a gladsome mind,
> Praise the Lord for He is kind;

Keble's

> There is a book, who runs may read,
> Which heavenly truth imparts;
> And all the lore its scholars need,
> Pure eyes and Christian hearts;

and Addison's well-known lines:

> The spacious firmament on high.

[1] *The Legacy of Israel*, pp. 25, 26.

There are psalms which are simply utterances of thankful praise. The most notable are to be found towards the end of the Psalter. These are the obvious models of the great hymns of praise and thanksgiving to which every generation of the Church has loved to add some new note.

It was said recently by a Jewish scholar, who had been spending a long time in careful and critical examination of the Psalter, that when he came to Psalm cl. he felt as if he had come out of the darkness and gloom of a forest into the splendour and sunlight of a summer day, when all the birds were singing and the whole world filled with the joy of the Lord.

Several of the Hebrew titles of the Psalms indicate their nature as poetry, but one of them (T^{e}hilla) indicates a hymn of praise, while another (T^{e}filla) indicates a prayer or supplication. Thus two of the main classes into which hymns fall were contained in the Hebrew Psalter, and gave suggestions to subsequent hymn writers.

From the structure of the Psalms themselves we can see—as in Psalm cxxxvi, with its repeated refrain —that the practice existed of responses from the congregation. We may compare with this psalm 2 Chron. vii. 6, where we read of the Levites engaging in the service with their instruments of music, which David the King had made to give thanks unto the Lord, " for His mercy endureth for ever."

Outside the Psalter proper there are contained in the Old Testament many splendid songs, as, for example, the so-called " blessing of Moses " in Deut. xxxiii ; and we notice how, in this, as in

other passages, formulæ of blessing commonly occur. In simpler forms these are to be found in such passages as 1 Kings i. 48, Nehemiah ix. 5, etc. More elaborate benedictions conclude each of the five sections of the Book of Psalms itself. These undoubtedly formed models for the beautiful and poetical benedictions which form, even to this day, a striking feature of the synagogue service. In the books which we commonly call "The Apocrypha" there are various passages that follow the lines laid down by the Hebrew Psalter, one of the best known being the *Benedicite*, which still remains in the Morning Service of the Church of England as an alternative to the *Te Deum*, and appears to have been employed very early in the history of Christian worship.

The famous passage in Ecclesiasticus, chapters xliv–l, is also very hymn-like in structure, but a comparatively recent discovery of a passage contained in the original Hebrew text of this section is of special interest, as being a link between the Hebrew Psalter and later forms of Hebrew hymns. As it is not very familiar, it may be well to quote it here at length:

Give thanks unto the Lord for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto the God of praises; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto Him that keepeth Israel; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto Him that formed all things; for His mercy endureth for ever.

Give thanks unto the Redeemer of Israel; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto Him that gathereth the outcasts of Israel; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto Him that buildeth His city and His sanctuary; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto Him that maketh a horn to sprout for the house of David; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto Him that hath chosen the sons of Zadok for the priesthood; for His mercy endureth for ever.

Give thanks unto the Shield of Abraham; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto the Rock of Isaac; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto the Mighty One of Jacob; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto Him that hath chosen Zion; for His mercy endureth for ever.
Give thanks unto the King of the kings of kings; for His mercy endureth for ever.
And He hath lifted up a horn for His people; for the praise of all His pious ones, for the children of Israel, a people nigh unto Him; Hallelujah.

When the Jews established the service of the synagogue they modelled this largely on the Psalter, and included in it, for festival occasions, the special series of psalms known as the *Hallel*, viz. Ps. cxiii–cxviii.

The benedictions, already referred to, were also a feature of the worship.

The influence of the Hebrew Psalter is also very manifest in the pages of the New Testament. It is most obvious in the two hymns contained in the first chapter of Luke's Gospel—the *Magnificat* and the *Benedictus*, as the Latin Church taught all Christendom to name them—and in the short hymn of Simeon, contained in the second chapter and known as the *Nunc Dimittis*. We must remember that Jesus, the apostles, and the whole company of early disciples were familiar with the synagogue service, and constantly took part in it. So that the items of praise contained therein would naturally suggest a starting-point for their own forms of service, and they created these for the purposes of Christian worship. The verse in Mark xiv. 26, "When they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives," almost certainly indicates the use of one of the Hebrew songs of praise from the Psalter. We read of Paul and Silas singing hymns unto God in the prison at Philippi (Acts xvi. 25). While, of course, we do not know what these hymns were, it is probable they were also passages from the Psalms.

There are various references in Paul's letters to singing, but what the nature of the songs was must be pure conjecture. One thing is at any rate clear, that Paul had no sympathy with what has become too common in modern times, singing purely for its emotional effect without adequate thought about the meaning of the words. For in 1 Cor. xiv. 15, he says, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will

sing with the understanding also." In this view the famous Jewish writer of the Middle Ages, Maimonides (1135–1204), agrees with him, for he says, "The intellect which emanates from God unto us is the link that joins us to Him."

In Ephes. v. 19, Paul writes of "speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." This seems to indicate a somewhat more elaborate form of early Christian worship, and may even include the practice of solo-singing; but at all events it is ample proof that praise was a recognized part of Christian worship as early as the middle of the first century, though we cannot decide whether these hymns included original compositions. Passages that are sometimes cited as fragments of early Christian song seem to be doubtfully so termed.[1]

In the Book of *Revelation* there are several passages of a lyrical character, as, for example, iv. 8–11, v. 12–14, xix. 6–8.

We have thus briefly sketched the nature of the material which forms the background of Christian hymn-writing, and can see how the evolution from Hebrew originals was perfectly natural. It is also clear that the Christians, when they began to produce hymns of their own, were, consciously or unconsciously, following the example of their Master, Who said, with reference to the Hebrew law, that He had come not to destroy but to fulfil it. In their case the ideas, and to some extent the form, of Hebrew lyric poetry was preserved as the starting-

[1] See F. J. Gillman's *Evolution of the English Hymn*, p. 36.

point of the new development. But, unfortunately, the complete material of the Hebrew Psalter was also taken over with the rest of the Old Testament and given in its entirety an authority and sanctity which it did not deserve. Had they remembered and applied their Lord's teaching, that His authority transcended that of Moses, David, Solomon, and Jonah, the Church might have been saved from much of the perplexity, and even unchristian practice, which marred it for centuries, and whose effects are even now traceable in a great deal of the thought and action of modern Christendom.

CHAPTER II

"GLAD, CONFIDENT MORNING"

THAT the advent of Christianity into the world should have been heralded with song is natural. Almost every great movement that has marked a new flood-tide in human aspirations and ideals has produced its poets, and surely the greatest inrush of the Divine Spirit upon the life of men should have kindled in the hearts of waiting and expectant souls the flame of song.

As we have already seen, the birth of John the Forerunner inspired his father to produce a pæan of praise on the model of the Old Testament (Luke i. 76–79). The poem is no extemporary utterance, of course, but an artistic creation on the lines of ancient Hebrew poetry. Neither is the song attributed to the Mother of Jesus any naive uprush of emotion from the heart of a village maiden, but an elaborate mosaic of reminiscences from older poets, welded into a song suitable to the great Figure the evangelist is about to portray in his pages. It is not at all probable that Luke was the author of these poems, but that he found them among the documents he had examined, and they probably form part of the earliest treasury of Judaeo-Christian song.

Similarly, the words put into the mouth of Simeon display the same characteristics: "A light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of thy

people Israel," is a poetic description of the purpose and power of the Person and ministry of Jesus that could scarcely have been written until the significance of His work, as a unifying influence in the world, had been in some measure manifested and understood.

Even if to some extent legendary, it is easy to see the extreme beauty and appropriateness that attach to the picture of the angelic choir praising the newborn babe in a couplet of Hebrew verse :

Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth Peace, good pleasure among men (Luke ii. 14, 15).

These lines, as we shall presently discover, form the foundation of the earliest Christian hymn, designed for congregational worship, that has come down to us through the ages. We have referred on a former page to the poetic passages in the Book of *Revelation*, but it is worth while now to consider them a little more carefully, as, though they are modelled on Hebrew forms, they are considerably more free in construction, and manifest a new type. They are "new songs" not only in essence and spiritual significance but in form. The first of these is the Song of the Living Creatures with the four and twenty elders :

Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof,
For Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe and tongue, and people and nation.

And madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests : and they reign upon the earth (Rev. v. 9, 10).

Each of the singers, probably the elders only, accompanies the song on a lyre or zithern, the traditional instrument of Hebrew praise, for the same word is frequently employed in the Greek version of the Psalms. Later in the same book (Rev. xiv. 2, 3) mention is made of a secret and mystic song, sung apparently by the angelic host, the words of which are not disclosed, but the incident gave rise to forms of expression in later liturgies, as, for example, in the *Liturgy of St. James*, in which we find this passage :

" The God and Master of all things, Whom heaven and the heaven of heavens hymn and all their powers : the sun and the moon and all the choir of the stars : the earth, the sea, and all that is in them : Jerusalem, the heavenly assembly, the church of the first-born written in heaven : the spirits of just men and of prophets ; the souls of martyrs and apostles ; angels, archangels, thrones, dominations, principalities, virtues, and the tremendous powers ; the Cherubim of many eyes, and the Seraphim that have six wings, with twain whereof they cover their faces and with twain their feet, and with twain they do fly, crying one to the other with ceaseless tongues and perpetual doxologies, the triumphal hymn to the majesty of Thy glory, singing with a loud voice, crying, praising, vociferating, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth ; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest : blessed

is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord : Hosanna in the highest." [1]

The passage already quoted from an earlier chapter of *Revelation* contains a phrase which occurs in almost the same form, three times in the book.[2] This has been thought to be an echo of a primitive hymn which may have run :

" Thou hast made us a kingdom ; priests to God and Thy Father ; and we shall reign upon the earth." [3]

Similar language is to be found in 1 Peter iii. 9, where there seems to be a reference to some words well known, and where the passage is of a poetical character.

Though we have very little material on which to judge, we may take it as pretty certain that the beginnings of Christian song centred around the great Figure of the risen Lord, and dealt with His marvellous love in the redemption of men ; that is, they were probably the reflection of what we know to have been the main burden of apostolic preaching.

When we pass beyond the pages of the New Testament we find that some of the simple fragments of song contained there were expanded by anonymous hands into more elaborate forms. How early this was done we have no means of knowing with certainty, but it was probably a gradual process.

[1] Neale and Littledale : *Translations of the Primitive Liturgies*, p. 48 ; also Swete's *Apocalypse of St. John*, p. 175.

[2] Rev. i. 6, v. 10, xx. 6.

[3] Swete's *Apocalypse*, p. 80.

One of the earliest examples is the expansion of the Angels' hymn in Luke ii. 14. Our earliest text is contained in the *Codex Alexandrinus* at the end of the fifth century, but the original must have been much older. The translation is thus given by Chatfield :

Glory to God in the highest, and upon earth peace, goodwill among men.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we give thanks to Thee.
We worship Thee, we glorify Thee for Thy great glory,
O Lord the King in heaven, God the Father Almighty,
O Lord the only begotten Son Jesus Christ, and Holy Spirit :
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us :
O Thou who takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayers :
O Thou who sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy upon us.
For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. AMEN.

Every day will I bless Thee
And praise Thy name for ever,
And for ever and ever.
Vouchsafe, O Lord, through this day also
That we may be kept without sin.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers,
And praised and glorified be Thy name
For ever and ever. AMEN.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy judgments.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy judgments.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy judgments.
O Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation.
I have said, O Lord have mercy upon me.
Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.
O Lord to Thee have I fled for refuge: teach me to do Thy will.
For Thou art my God,
For with Thee is the fountain of life,
In Thy light shall we see light.
Extend Thy mercy to them that know Thee.[1]

It is clear that this hymn is made up of phrases selected from various sources, including the response so familiar in the Litany, one that was already consecrated to the use of worship. The twofold repetition of the "Amen" may indicate stages in the composition of the hymn. We notice that it contains an ascription to the Trinity and a recognition of the divinity of Christ and of the validity of His sacrifice for the sin of the world. On the whole, it is a hymn of praise in acknowledgment of the mercy and love of God.

[1] Chatfield, *Songs and Hymns of the Greek Christian Poets*, p. 161.

Another of these anonymous hymns is based on the song of the Seraphim in Is. vi. 3, and runs as follows :

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth :
Heaven and earth are full of His glory,
Blessed art Thou for ever. Amen.—

to which the following lines are sometimes added :

Hosanna to the Son of David :
Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord :
Hosanna in the highest.

Again we note the ascription to Christ of divine glory, and it is significant that in the Eastern liturgies this hymn always occurred as part of the Eucharist.

There was another brief ascription to God, which legend affirmed to have been miraculously communicated to the people of Byzantium during an earthquake in the fifth century, but which is certainly much earlier. It runs :

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal,
Have mercy upon us.

An evening hymn is based on the *Nunc Dimittis*, to which is prefixed a few lines, consisting of a verse of the Psalms, followed by a slightly varied form of the lines, " We praise Thee," etc., from the *Gloria*

in Excelsis, given above. Then follows the praise of Christ the Redeemer and of the Holy Trinity :

O Lord the King, the Father of Christ, the Lamb without blemish,
Who taketh away the sin of the world,
To Thee belongeth praise, to Thee belongeth the hymn, to Thee belongeth glory.
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
Throughout all ages. Amen.

Best known of all these hymns is the *Te Deum*, which is far too familiar to require quotation. This is not the place to discuss its origin and authorship, of which nothing certain is known. There seems, however, little doubt that at least part of it was first composed in Greek, and the whole hymn now consists of three sections, which may have originally existed separately. The first part is a hymn to Christ as God : " We praise Thee, *as* God " the opening words should be rendered. This strongly reminds us of Pliny's well-known testimony in his letter to Trajan, in the second century, that the Christians sang hymns to Christ as God, apparently in some sort of antiphonal song.[1]

The second section begins with " Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ," and undoubtedly originally stated the doctrine of the Incarnation more clearly, the words being, " When Thou tookest humanity upon Thee, for the world's deliverance." The later words should not read " Make them to be *numbered* with Thy saints," but " Cause them to be *rewarded* with Thy saints."

[1] See Pliny, *Epistles*, x, 97.

The third part of the hymn consists of two sections, the first being two antiphons:

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thy heritage,
Govern them and lift them up for ever,

and:

Day by day we magnify Thee;
And we worship Thy name ever world without end.

The second section consists of four versicles and responses. The first section, therefore, is a hymn to the Trinity, expressing the praise of earth, heaven, and the Church; while the second part sets forth, in glowing words, the wonders of the divine Christ, His incarnation, atonement, ascension, session at the right hand of God, and His coming in judgment. This concludes with a prayer that His followers may share His glory.

The essentials of the Christian faith, as then understood, are thus set forth with great sympathy and beauty, and therefore the hymn has remained till the present time undimmed by the centuries, because it stands above creeds and expresses in the language of adoration the outlines of New Testament doctrine.

That the thought of the Trinity and of the redeeming love of Christ was the main theme of these early hymns is seen from another that is well known in many forms—perhaps most familiar in the version by Longfellow in *The Golden Legend*, as this

is frequently used as the words of an anthem to Sullivan's music. We here quote this version :

O gladsome light
Of the Father Immortal,
And of the celestial
Sacred and blessed
Jesus, our Saviour !

Now to the sunset
Again hast thou brought us ;
And, seeing the evening
Twilight, we bless thee,
Praise thee, adore thee !

Father omnipotent !
Son, the Life-giver !
Spirit, the Comforter !
Worthy at all times
Of worship and wonder.

The haunting simplicity of the words constitutes their abiding charm. "There is no fancy, no ecstasy of emotion. The poetry consists in the faith in the vision of the Invisible. The praise is not so much the utterance of man's feelings as of God's name. The images are so simple as to be scarcely images at all, but only the clearest expression of truth. And yet what sweeter or sublimer evening thoughts could any desire to rest the heart upon ! " [1]

There is another early hymn—quite different in character from those already mentioned—attributed

[1] Mrs. R. Charles, *Christian Life in Song*, p. 35.

to Methodius, a bishop and martyr of the latter half of the third century. The hymn consists of twenty-four verses—each with a two-lined chorus:

With holy feet, and lamps bright burning,
I go to meet my Lord returning.

Each verse begins with a letter of the Greek alphabet, so the poem is reminiscent of the acrostic psalms.

It is a hymn for virgins, designed to encourage them in their high calling, and is based on the parable of the ten virgins. The soloist, in the first five verses, describes her own life, then addresses Christ and the Church, and tells the story of her foolish companions. At verse eleven the singer turns to the consideration of great examples, from Abel to the Virgin Mary, and concludes with a gladsome anticipation of the joys of Paradise, as will be seen from the closing verse, which runs as follows:

Father of Heaven, supreme in might,
Dwelling in pure eternal light
With Thine own Son most dear.
Admit—for we are here—
E'en us within the gates of life, to sing Thy love
In Thy blest courts above! [1]

Among the early Greek hymns there are several to which famous names are attached as their authors, and as these belong rather to the works of these writers than to the later service-books of the Church, it may be convenient to consider them in this chapter.

[1] Chatfield, op. cit., pp. 141 ff.

One of the best known is from the pen of Clement of Alexandria, the great theologian and teacher of the second century. The hymn is the earliest of a type increasingly familiar since his day, being a meditation on the names of Jesus, akin to the hymn by Newton that is so great a favourite with modern worshippers :

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds.

It will be remembered that the fifth stanza runs :

Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest and King ;
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
Accept the praise I bring.

Here are some lines from Clement's hymn :

O Saviour Jesus, Shepherd, Husbandman,
Helm Thou to guide, and Bridle to restrain,
Wing of the holy flock that heaven would gain,
Thou art, O Christ, the living heavenly Way,
The everflowing Word, unchanging Day,
Eternal Light, and Mercy's healthful Spring.

The hymn is found in many hymn-books, in the paraphrase by Dexter beginning

Shepherd of tender youth.

This hymn is also memorable as the first written mainly for children, whose praise Clement valued as

of chief importance, since he was mindful of his Master's joy in the song of the boys and girls in the streets of Jerusalem.

A great figure in the Christian life of the fourth century was Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzus. He had been a college friend of the Emperor Julian, who led the last great battle of pagan philosophy against Christianity.[1] His most strenuous days were passed in Constantinople, where the orthodox Christians were in very low water and suffered manifold hardships. His last years were spent in retirement and literary work. He was the author of many poems, and among them are his hymns, which deal mainly with great questions of doctrine, such as the nature of God and the person of Christ, though some are simple hymns of praise. Eight have been translated by Chatfield, and from these one or two illustrative quotations will be taken.[2] His thought is overwhelmed by the marvel of the divine nature, and his verses voice both his perplexity at the subject and his confidence in the divine power:

Unuttered Thou! all uttered things
  Have had their birth from Thee;
The One Unknown! from Thee the springs
  Of all we know and see.

. . . . .

And lo! all things abide in Thee,
  And through the complex whole
Thou spreadst Thy own Divinity,
  Thyself of all the goal.

[1] See Ibsen's *Emperor and Galilean* for a picture of the period.
[2] Chatfield, op. cit., pp. 99–136.

In his Easter hymn to Christ he praises him as "The Father's Brightness, Word of the Great Mind":

Without beginning; from same Fount of Light
With the Great Spirit; infinite in might.

Christ is the source of all creation, as the Gospel of John and the Epistles teach:

Thou madest all, to all thou givest life,
And all Thou guidest; nowhere fault or strife,
Nor error in Thy workmanship is found.

He sings the power of the resurrection:

That we newborn might rise from death set free,
And ever live, ascending Lord, with Thee.

Similar thoughts fill another hymn to Christ, which contains praise of the Trinity, and concludes with a hope of the Second Advent:

To Thee I bend the knee;
When He shall come grant me,
That I His glory see,
That I His servant be
When He shall come—shall come again,
When He shall come—shall come to reign.

A resemblance has been traced between Gregory and Bishop Ken, both in their mental and spiritual attitudes, and in the fact that they were both authors

of morning and evening hymns, full of tender and gracious thoughts and heavenly wisdom.

Gregory's short morning hymn we may quote, and the two evening hymns will be found in Chatfield, pp. 121–124. The morning hymn runs as follows:

'Tis dawn: to God I lift my hand,
To regulate my way;
My passions rule, and unmoved stand,
And give to Thee the day!

Not one dark word or deed of sin,
Nor one base thought allow:
But watch all avenues within,
And wholly keep my vow.

Shamed were my age, should I decline:
Shamed were Thy table too,
At which I stand:—the will is mine:
Give grace, my Christ, to do.

A picturesque figure of the same century, rendered familiar to English readers in the pages of Kingsley's *Hypatia*, is Synesius, Bishop of Ptolemais. He was a Platonist, and many of his hymns bear strong indications of his speculations, and are indeed not doctrinal at all; but others have distinctively Christian characteristics, though they are rather more in the nature of reflective religious poetry than of hymns. They can hardly, with one exception, have been designed for use in public worship.[1] He

[1] Prose outlines or précis paraphrases of the hymns are to be found in W. S. Crawford, *Synesius the Hellene*, pp. 496–506, and verse renderings in Chatfield, op. cit., pp. 1–90.

hymns the glories of creation and delights in paradoxical terms by which to proclaim the mystery of the divine Being, as, for example :

> The Father and the Mother Thou,
> Male, female, unto Thee we bow :
> Or voice be heard, or all be still,
> 'Tis just as ordered by Thy will.

Again :

> Thou art the Parent Tree,
> All have their life from Thee
> Or stem or branch whatever is, is Thine.
> Thou art the Light of light,
> The light of day so bright,
> The Light that shineth evermore Divine :
> Thou art again the hidden Light,
> By its own glory hidden far from mortal sight.

One of his favourite thoughts is the value of the worship of silence, thus forestalling the thought of George Fox. In the following lines we find this idea presented :

> O Blesséd, Thee I praise,
> Or whether voice I raise,
> Or solemn silence keep : for to Thine ear
> No more the uttered speech
> Than Mind's still voice doth reach ;
> Unuttered though the word, yet Thou dost hear.

The Trinity is a frequent subject in these hymns,

and he gives the Holy Spirit middle rank between the two other Persons; for example:

> And Spirit mid-enthroned compeer,
> The Parent Root and Branch between.[1]

The ninth hymn contains a very wonderful picture of Christ's victory over death, and of the joy in His triumph, expressed by the powers of nature. The rule of Christ over nature is the theme in several of the hymns—often very beautifully expressed. The last and simplest of the hymns is found in some modern collections, and reveals to us the humble Christian attitude of the philosopher in the presence of his Saviour:

> Lord Jesu, think on me,
> And purge away my sin:
> From earth-born passions set me free,
> And make me pure within.

Another realm of hymnody dates from these early centuries in the work done in this department by the Syrian Church. The recently discovered series of odes, known as the *Odes of Solomon*, which were found by Dr. Rendel Harris in a Syriac manuscript in his possession, and issued in an English translation as *An Early Christian Psalter*, are a very interesting witness to the thought of the time. Many problems surround them which cannot be discussed in these pages, but some of the hymns are quite certainly Christian, and all of them breathe a spirit of real

[1] Hymn v, line 57; cf. iii, 220–240, and iv, 97.

devotion. "They are songs of the Springtime," says the editor, "as well as songs of the Dark and of the Dawn." One or two extracts will reveal their character. Here is one which unites the mystical language of the *Song of Songs* with the thought of the Johannine literature of the New Testament, and shows a grasp of the deepest idea of the Eternal Life, as well as of a real experience of fellowship with Christ. "I love the Beloved, and my Soul loves Him; and where His rest is, there also am I: and I shall be no stranger, for with the Lord Most High and Merciful there is no grudging. I have been united to Him, because I find love to the Beloved, and because I love Him that is the Son, that I may myself be a son: for he that is joined to Him that is immortal, will also himself become immortal; and he who is accepted in the Living One, will become living." [1]

It was very customary in these early days to see the figure of the Cross in all possible suggestive articles—incidents of the Old Testament, or in the attitude of a worshipper standing with outstretched arms in the act of prayer. One of these little hymns expresses this latter thought in these words: "I stretched out my hands and worshipped the Lord; for the extension of my hands is His Sign: and my expansion is the upright cross." The last passage we can here quote consists of a few lines at the close of a hymn, which shows the writer's belief in the incarnation, victory, and glory of Christ:

"The man who was humbled, and exalted by

[1] Ode 3. For a verse translation of one of the odes see F. J. Gillman, *The Evolution of the English Hymn*, pp. 39–40.

His own righteousness, the Son of the Most High, who appeared in the perfection of His Father; and light dawned from the Word that was before Time in Him; the Messiah is truly one, and He was known before the foundation of the world, that He might save souls for ever by the truth of His name; a new song arises from those that love Him. Hallelujah!" [1]

The first hymn writer of the Syriac Church whose name we know was Bardesenes, born about the middle of the second century. He held views contrary to the orthodox opinion, and seems to have composed hymns in order to spread these ideas among the pople. But of these hymns we possess only fragments and accounts of their subject-matter in the orthodox verses of Ephraem Syrus—a writer of the fourth century—who died at Edessa in A.D. 373. He wrote a large number of books, and among them a series of *Metrical Homilies* which are long and full of doctrinal teaching. They appear to have been sung in certain religious services, and have been compared to "the tracts in verse explanatory of the Christian religion, circulated by missionaries in some parts of India and which the people like to read aloud in a kind of chant." [2] It is in these compositions that we find references to Bardesenes. Ephraem says:

> He thus concealed for the simple
> The bitter with the sweet.

[1] Op. cit., pp. 48 and 66.
[2] See Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology*, p. 1109.

For the sickly do not prefer
Food which is wholesome.
He sought to imitate David,
To adorn himself with his beauty,
So that he might be praised by the likeness,
He therefore set in order
Psalms one hundred and fifty.
But he deserted the truth of David
And only imitated his numbers.[1]

He accuses him of dishonouring the fair name of the Holy Spirit, of denying the truth of the resurrection of the body, and of darkening the truth of immortality.

Ephraem himself was the author of many hymns, which have survived, and are the most famous of the Syriac hymns. Some are in dialogue form, and others have solo verses with a chorus. Many are memorial hymns on the death of a Christian, and naturally these do not contain many elements of doctrine save a profound hope in the life beyond death and in the glories of heaven. Three verses may here be quoted from a striking hymn on the resurrection :

" Come, enter ye children of the light ! "
Jesus will cry to His beloved ones in that hour :
" Receive your crowns, the reward of your labour,
Ye heirs of an everlasting kingdom ! "

Both the just and the unjust shall pass through
The fire which is to try them, and shall be proved by it :

[1] Burgess, *Select Metrical Hymns and Homilies of Ephraem Syrus*, p. xxx.

The righteous pass and the flame is quiet,
But it burneth the wicked, and snatches them away.

Solitary is Hades—it has become a desolate land!
The graves are opened and emptied:
And the children of Adam rise from the dust,
And the creatures ascend to their Lord![1]

In these hymns we find use made of the Gospel narratives for enforcing doctrine, as in the following verse:

> The voice which called to Lazarus,
> And to the maid, the daughter of Jairus,
> Will call thee and raise thee up,
> And clothe thee with spotless glory.[2]

A hymn that presents a prayer in prospect of judgment is rather touching, and we have the advantage of quoting three verses from the translation by H. C. Leonard. It links our thought to many similar hymns of the Latin Church, and to the greatest of all, the *Dies Irae*:

Before the blast
  Of death doth blow,
As on a tree
  No more to grow,
And fell disease
  Doth lay me low,
Thy mercy on me, gracious Lord, do Thou bestow!

[1] Burgess, op. cit., p. 51.

[2] Burgess, op. cit., p. 32.

Ere yet the sun
Becometh blind
In all the sky
Where once it shined,
O lighten, Lord,
My darkened mind.
Thy mercy, O thou gracious Lord, now let me find !

Before the trump,
Both loud and clear,
Proclaims to earth
Thy advent near,
Have pity, Lord,
O Saviour, hear !
In mercy, O Thou gracious Lord, to me appear ! [1]

It is in the *Metrical Homilies* that we get definite doctrinal teaching, and specific mention of heresies. These latter concern the doctrine of the Trinity, the nature of the person of Christ, and the theory of the eternity of matter. The thought is often subtle and well expressed, and freely illustrated by analogies. The writer is not gentle to his adversaries, as the following lines show :

Marcion collected together his wolves,
And his ally collected his foxes,
And Manes his herds of swine ;
That they might war against Him
Who, by the hand of David,
Had stopped the roaring of the lion and the bear,
And bound together the foxes
By the hand of Samson.[2]

[1] H. C. Leonard, *Sacred Songs of the World*, p. 124.
[2] Burgess, op. cit., p. 146.

We can imagine a certain fierce joy in thus singing of their adversaries, but not an aid to the promotion of a truly Christian temper, and we shall find that this type of song recurs all too frequently in the course of the centuries. When hymns were not specially written to suit the occasion, the "cursing Psalms" formed a very convenient substitute.

Our last quotation will be one from the Homily on the two natures of Christ, designed as a protest against those who over-emphasized the human side, and did not sufficiently recognize the reality of God in Him :

To the feeble body,
With which descending He clothed Himself,
His name and actions are accommodated,
And as it was necessary
That He should suffer hunger,
So it was necessary that He should pray ;
And as the affection of hunger
Appertains altogether to the body ;
So his lacking anything
Belonged entirely to the flesh.
Perish not through the names
With which that Living One clothed Himself,
That he might give life to all men !

For that Mighty One put on names
Which fall short of Him through His bodily form
Because of His mercy towards you.
Concerning which of them
Do ye decide that it is true,
And honourable and glorious ?

The name of the Father is true ;
The name of the Son is faithful ;
That of the Pardoner is worthy of love ;
That of Judge is terrible.
As the Son of Man He is circumscribed,
But, being unbounded in His nature,
He is truly God.[1]

Of the nature of the Syriac hymns contained in existing service-books much information may be obtained from Dr. A. J. Maclean's article on Syriac Christian hymns in Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, and from his elaborate work on the *East Syrian Daily Offices*. In Moorsom's *Renderings of Church Hymns* several specimens are given, very excellently translated, and with a verse from one of these—a hymn on the Church—this chapter must close :

Peace be hers, within her temples :
Strength be hers, her walls to guard :
May her holiness and beauty
By no evil thing be marred,
Through all perils, Saviour, guide
To Thy heaven Thy crownéd Bride ![2]

[1] Burgess, op. cit., pp. 167, 168.

[2] Op. cit., p. 41.

CHAPTER III

HYMNS OF THE GREEK SERVICE-BOOKS

HITHERTO we have considered hymns of individual writers, which were the outcome of their own personal religious feeling, or, as in the case of Ephraem, answers to opinions which were held by the orthodox teachers to be irregular. In a sense this must always be true, because poetry that is worthy of the name is always the upspringing of inspiration within the human soul. Hymns that are made to order in any age of the world, or in any country, are generally unsuccessful, though we know there are exceptions to this rule, as in the case of Bishop Heber's famous missionary hymn "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," which we are told was written at the request of the Vicar of Wrexham in a very short time, on a Saturday prior to a missionary sermon to be preached next day.

Hymns seem from the earliest ages till the present time to have been generally the result of popular religious feeling. We find, for example, that when any great religious revival springs up, as in the case of the Wesleys, of the Salvation Army, or of Services such as those led by Moody and Sankey, a large number of hymns are composed, as it were spontaneously, by all sorts of people who are moved by the new spirit. These are in course of time selected and regularized, and so give rise to hymn-books that in the course of years are enlarged, revised, and

sometimes improved out of all recognition when compared with the originals from which they started.

Thus it was in the early days. Philo tells us in the first century that the monks of Egypt wrote hymns in honour of the true God, in various metres, and that some of them were composed in entirely new metres. These were apparently sung first as a solo by the president, who was followed by choirs of men and women, singing alternately, and then finally the whole company joining in chorus.

We have various testimonies that this practice was maintained through the succeeding centuries, and in the middle of the third century we find Paul of Samosata condemned by the Council of Antioch for rejecting such hymns. In the year 506 the Council of Agde ordered hymns to be sung daily both at morning and evening service, and by the middle of the seventh century the sixth Council of Toledo spoke very firmly on the question, for one of its decisions reads as follows: "For singing hymns and psalms publicly in the church we have the example of Christ and His apostles; let none of you for the future withhold hymns composed in praise of God, but let Gaul and Spain celebrate them alike. Those should be excommunicated who shall dare to reject hymns."

We have already seen the simple form of early Greek hymns, which arose from modifications of passages in the New Testament, and, while the decision of the Council of Antioch, noted above, shows that hymns were commonly in use in the middle of the third century, there are evidences more than a century later of scruples in certain quarters

against any other form of praise than the psalms, and even as late as the middle of the sixth century the Council of Braga in Spain forbade the use of hymns.

This seemingly conflicting testimony is easily explicable if variety of practice existed in different communions, as may be found even at the present day in Scotland, where there are a few congregations that will use nothing save the metrical version of the Psalms, while others will employ the latest type of hymn-book.

From the seventh century onwards the Greek service-books became more and more elaborate. This is not the place in which to describe the variety, and the extreme intricacy, of the forms employed. An excellent account of these will be found in Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*, pp. 462, 463, and in the Introduction to Brownlie's *Hymns of the Holy Eastern Church* and *Hymns of the Greek Church*.

Of these forms the most important for the student of Greek hymns are the *Odes and Canons*. Both of these are based upon the subjects of the canticles in the Greek Service-books, and thus there is a certain monotony in the subject-matter of all the hymns, though to get the variety that the greatest hymn writers introduce may for this reason be reckoned a more wonderful triumph.

The Western or Latin Church undoubtedly copied the East ; indeed, Augustine, writing at the end of the fourth century, definitely tells us so, when, in describing the hymns sung in Milan Cathedral, he says : " These hymns and Psalms are sung after the

manner of the Easterns, lest the people be wearied, which is imitated by almost all the congregations in the world." Augustine is referring especially to the hymns composed by his friend and master, Ambrose, and it appears to have been the practice, originated by the latter in Milan Cathedral, that directed the use of hymns in the subsequent ritual of the Western Church. Another important factor was the rule of Benedict, who prescribed the manner of using hymns in the services of the monasteries of his order, and this method spread rapidly over Europe after the sixth century.

The forms in which these arrangements of hymns are most easily accessible to us are in the various *Breviaries* that exist in the Western Church. The story of their origin and variety is intricate and elaborate, and those interested must seek special sources of information, though, again, the simplest introduction to the subject is to be found in Julian. The breviaries, as we know them, were undoubtedly preceded by various other service-books, one of which was definitely termed the *Hymnal.* To give some idea of the number of Latin hymns included in these collections, it may be said that Julian gives a list of over a thousand in his *Dictionary*, and these are exclusive of a very famous set of hymns which originated in the ninth century, called *Sequences.*

These were the invention of Notker Balbulus, a monk of St. Gaul in Switzerland, who died in 912, though earlier experiments had preceded his efforts. The name arose from the Latin word *sequentia*, which meant " the things that follow," a term given to a long series of musical notes that prolonged the

last syllable of the word *Alleluia*. It was difficult for the singers to remember these notes when they were sung only to a syllable, and in order to make the memorizing of them more simple, and also to introduce more spiritual value into the worship, Balbulus composed hymns to be sung to them.

Some of these sequences form the most famous hymns of the later Latin Church. Of these, derived from various sources in which they occur, Julian gives a list of over six hundred.

It is a commonplace of criticism to say that the hymns of the Greek Church are concrete and objective, that is to say, they describe events of the Life of Christ, or the subjects of Christian doctrine, as if these were regarded from the outside. But though every one who has written about them says something of this sort, one seldom finds any attempt to answer the question why it should be so. It appears, however, that two reasons may be given for this peculiar quality of the majority of these hymns. Many readers have to take on trust the statement that it does apply to the majority of the hymns, because very few of them have been translated into English.

It must be remembered that during the early portion of the period discussed in this chapter the great creeds of the Church were being formulated, and these hymns were largely designed to emphasize and expound orthodox doctrine. The creeds in the main are statements as to belief in doctrines about the Trinity, the Person and work of Christ, the nature of the last things, and the true meaning of the Church. We can thus see how, following the

creeds, the hymn-writers can glorify and illustrate these doctrines, and yet the writers need not, and frequently do not, express the feelings raised in their own minds and hearts by their personal response to these doctrines. In the second place, the hymns are written for Church worship and follow closely, as we have said, the fixed order of worship, and arise out of Biblical passages contained in that service, and so they naturally take an objective or historical character. It will now suffice if we illustrate from a few of these hymns some of the doctrines they proclaim. First of all they deal with the Incarnation, and frequently do so in a manner that attempts to set forth the Babe of Bethlehem as at the same time the Ruler of the Universe. As, for example, in two lines from a hymn ascribed to St. Germanus :

> The Word becomes Incarnate,
> And yet remains on high ;

or this by St. Cosmas :

Oh wondrous myst'ry, full of passing grace !
The grot becometh Heav'n ; the Virgin's breast
The bright cherubic Throne : the stall that place
Where He, who fills all space, vouchsafes to rest :
Christ our God, to whom we raise
Hymns of thankfulness and praise !

A large number of the hymns, and some of them the most famous, deal with the Resurrection. It is natural that this great subject—the very centre of

the Christian gospel and one of the most joyful utterances of the Creed—should be found a central topic in these hymns. One of the finest and best known is familiar in most of our hymn-books in Dr. Neale's translation of its opening section :

The day of resurrection !
Earth ! tell it out abroad !
The Passover of gladness !
The Passover of God !

But each section of this long and splendid ode by St. John of Damascus has its reference to the same great theme.

Here, for example, is the first verse of the section based on the prayer of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace :

Who from the fiery furnace sav'd the Three,
Suffers as mortal ; that, His Passion o'er,
This mortal, triumphing o'er death, might be
Vested with immortality once more :
He Whom our fathers still confest
God over all, for ever blest.

We may take still a third example, consisting of two verses of a hymn—translated by Brownlie :

We, all unworthy, stand around
Thy life-inspiring grave, and raise
To Thy great tenderness of heart,
O Christ, our Lord, a hymn of praise ;

For Thou gav'st welcome to the Cross,
Nor thrust the hand of death away,
That Thou, O Lover of our race,
Mightst give the Resurrection day.

Word with the Father in the past,
Word with the Father aye to reign ;
Mysterious born, to live and die,
And in His glory rise again.
O God of life, to Thee we sing,
O Saviour of our souls, to Thee
Let hymns from every heart arise,
And everlasting glory be.

A kindred subject that was very attractive to these poets was that of the Ascension. It marked for them the true complement of the birth at Bethlehem. One example must suffice, taken from a hymn written by St. Joseph of the Studium, who was one of the most prolific of the Greek hymn writers :

Stand we on Olivet : mark Him ascend,
Whose is the glory and might without end ;
There, with His own ones, the Giver of Good
Blessing them once more, a little while stood.
" Nothing can part us—nor distance, nor foes ;
Lo ! I am for you, and who can oppose ? "

The last of the subjects that we can here select is that one which had such enormous influence over the early Church, and has filled all the succeeding centuries in the thought of many Christians with

alternating gloom and splendour, hope and fear—the subject of the second Advent.

The greatest of the Greek hymns on the subject is that written by St. Theodore of the Studium. As Neale rightly says, it naturally suggests the majesty and splendour of the more famous Latin hymn, the *Dies Irae*, whose plangent throbbings and awful majesty have appealed to the whole Church since the day it was written. It is natural also that we should find in the hymns on this subject a more subjective note. It is not possible for the writer to think of the terrors of the Judgment without conceiving the part he is himself destined to play in it. Here are one or two verses from Theodore's hymn :

That fearful Day, that Day of speechless dread,
When Thou shalt come to judge the quick and dead,
I shudder to foresee,
O God ! what then shall be !

When Thou shalt come, angelic legions round,
With thousand thousands, and with trumpet sound,
Christ, grant me in the air
With saints to meet Thee there !

. . . . .

Have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, I cry,
When with Thine angels Thou appear'st on high :
And each shall doom inherit,
According to his merit.

How can I bear Thy fearful anger, Lord ?
I, that so often have transgress'd Thy word ?

But put my sins away,
And spare me in that day!

And finally, from the last section of the same ode:

Daniel of old beheld, in speechless terror,
The session of the Judge—the doom of error:
And what have I to plead
For mercy in my need?
Nothing save this: O grant me yet to be,
Ere that day come, renew'd and true to Thee!

There is an important doctrinal element in these Greek hymns which must be carefully noted, as it sprang from the orthodox teaching on the Person of Christ. Inasmuch as the Greek theologians, who formed the Church creeds, held the absolute deity of Christ in His human life, it became a logical result of this view to speak of the Virgin Mary by the famous title *Theotokos*, that is, Mother of God. This term became a theological watchword, and many of the hymns in the Greek service-book conclude with an attribution to the Virgin of Divine rights, and with a prayer of intercession addressed to her. We may take as our example the close of the ode from the Christmas Day service, of which the following paraphrase will give some idea:

O maiden, Mother of the living God,
Who hast our Saviour in the cradle laid;
Thou hast reversed Eve's old and bitter load,
And all earth's Motherhood a glory made.
Within thy womb hast sheltered Him—the Word,
A mystery great—our own Eternal Lord.

We cry and sing the strange and wondrous thing—
Glory to Thee, our high Eternal King.

The hour of Thine appearing now was nigh,
The summoned world around Thy cradle came ;
The Roman power ordained the mystery,
And on the roll Thine was the first great name.
Thy rule, still greater, thus began that day,
A rule that should the whole wide nations sway.
Our gift to Thee—the best—we joyful bring,
True dogma for Thy praise—Thou Saviour King !

The closing lines of the passage just quoted are very clear evidence of the insistence laid upon sound theological teaching by the authors of the Greek hymns.

In these hymns also we find frequent references to the angels and to their ministry on behalf of men. One striking and beautiful example from Joseph of the Studium may be given in Neale's translation :

Stars of the morning, so gloriously bright,
Fill'd with celestial resplendence and light ;
These that, where night never followeth day,
Raise the Tris-hagion ever and aye ;

These are Thy counsellors : these dost Thou own,
God of Sabaoth ! the nearest Thy throne ;
These are thy ministers ; these dost Thou send,
Help of the helpless ones ! man to defend.

These keep the guard, amidst Salem's dear bowers :
Thrones, Principalities, Virtues, and Powers :

Where with the Living Ones, mystical Four,
Cherubin, Seraphin, bow and adore.

" Who like the Lord ? "—thunders Michael, the chief :
Raphael, " the Cure of God," comforteth grief :
And, as at Nazareth, prophet of peace,
Gabriel, " the Light of God," bringeth release.

Then, when the earth was first pois'd in mid-space,
Then, when the planets first sped on their race,
Then, when were ended the six days' employ,
Then all the sons of God shouted for joy.

Still let them succour us ; still let them fight,
Lord of angelic hosts, battling for right !
Till, where their anthems they ceaselessly pour,
We with the angels may bow and adore !

Another important element in the Greek service-books was constituted by the Litanies. They are very beautiful, and probably formed a model for all the subsequent prayers of that character that have enriched the offices of the Church in subsequent generations. We shall quote only two verses of one of these from Brownlie's translation to show how wide were their sympathies and how beautiful their expression :

Let clouds and sunshine bless the earth,
Give fruits and flowers a timely birth,
Our harvests crown with peaceful mirth.
Have mercy, Lord, upon us.

Let voyagers by land and sea
In danger's hour in safety be ;
The suffering and the captives free.
Have mercy, Lord, upon us.

The hymns of the Greek Church that are most familiar to English worshippers, such as :

Art thou weary, art thou languid ?

do not concern us here for two reasons ; first, because they are not strictly doctrinal, and we are not dealing with the literary side of hymnology ; and secondly because, as Neale himself confesses, they are rather hymns suggested by phrases in the Greek original than strict translations.

It will be remembered that in the last chapter we called attention to a hymn of Clement dealing with the names of Jesus. There is one hymn in the Greek service-books, on a similar topic, and full of an exquisite tenderness, and a few lines from it are here quoted, in order that we may realize how, as century succeeds century, this thought of the associations of the name of Jesus inspires poet after poet :

Jesu, Name of names above,
Jesu, best and dearest,
Jesu, fount of perfect love,
Holiest, tend'rest, nearest ;
Jesu, source of grace completest,
Jesu, purest, Jesu sweetest,
Jesu, well of power Divine,
Make me, keep me, seal me Thine !

Thou didst call the Prodigal :
  Thou didst pardon Mary :
Thou Whose words can never fall,
  Love can never vary :
Lord, to heal my lost condition,
Give—for Thou canst give—contrition,
  Thou canst pardon all mine ill
  If Thou wilt : O say, " I will ! "

CHAPTER IV

HYMNS OF THE LATIN SERVICE-BOOKS

Closer to our own time than the Greek hymns stands the great body of Church praise in the Latin language. Not only are the words more familiar to us, but the forms of expression, and the thoughts themselves, are much more akin to our modern moods. As to the language, one of the most recent and ablest students of the subject has written as follows concerning the influence of the Latin translation of the Bible known as the *Vulgate*, made by Jerome in the fourth century: "Jerome, indeed, owed much to his unknown predecessors, who had based their versions on the Septuagint, and had introduced along with Hellenic elements the flavour of the vulgar tongue. He combined with these elements others derived from the Hebrew; so a part of the Hebraic spirit passed into his version.

"New rhythms appeared, and new and more romantic imagery. The mystical fervour of the Prophets, the melancholy of the Penitential Psalms or of the Lamentations, could not be rendered in Latin without giving that severe and logical language a strange flexibility, an emotional and symbolical quality which had been foreign to its nature. The whole literary imagination of the West was to be fed on the sonorous sentences of the Latin Bible, and Christian poetry, though true so long to its learned traditions, could not escape the spell or

fail to learn the new language, when it spoke in the poetical prose of lines like these :

iuxta est dies domini magnus,
iuxta est et velox nimis :
vox diei domini amara,
tribulabitur ibi fortis,
dies irae, dies illa,
dies tribulationis et angustiae,
dies calamitatis et miseriae,
dies tenebrarum et caliginis,
dies nebulae et turbinis,
dies tubae et clangoris
super civitates, munitas, et super angulos excelsos.
(Zeph. i, 14–16).

" Out of this music was to issue the poetry of the future, the poetry in which the Catholic emotion was to discover its final expression. It is the music of a new world, for out of it appeared at last, when its religious mission had been fulfilled, the romantic poetry of the modern world." [1]

It may be truly said that the beginning of the long story of the Latin hymns was made by Ambrose. There were indeed predecessors, but with the details of their work we cannot here concern ourselves. Ambrose obviously intended his hymns for congregational worship, and from his day onwards they have been so employed. His hymns are not speculative, as were those of so many of the Greeks, for the more practical character of the Roman mind prevailed not only in his own hymns but in the influence he exerted on those who followed him.

[1] F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry*, pp. 10, 11.

Though he was a distinguished theologian, he took up a vigorous and courageous stand against those whom he considered to be corrupters of Christian truth. His hymns are simple and their statements of doctrine quite clear. His best-known hymns are hardly doctrinal at all, but verses of praise for various periods of each day. We shall here quote a short hymn to the Trinity, which is, in form, also an evening hymn :

Bright and blessed Three in One,
Unity supreme, alone,
Whilst from us the daylight parts,
Pour Thy light into our hearts.

Thee when breaks the morning ray—
Thee when evening shuts the day—
Thee we call on suppliant knee,
Offering endless thanks to Thee.[1]

In another of his hymns he sets forth in clear language his view of the Virgin birth and its significance for the Person of Christ. The curious language of the third verse, quoted below, is a reference to Christ's two-fold nature, derived from the supposed double nature of the giants spoken of in Genesis vi, 4. The following rendering is that of Dr. Neale :

Come, Thou Redeemer of the earth,
Come, testify Thy Virgin-birth :
All lands admire—all times applaud ;
Such is the birth that fits a God.

[1] Translated by Dr. Lindsay Alexander in *Augustine Hymn-book*, No. 202.

Begotten of no human will,
But of the Spirit, mystic still,
The Word of God, in flesh array'd,
The promis'd fruit to man display'd.

Proceeding from His Chamber free,
The royal hall of chastity,
Giant of twofold substance, straight
His destined way He runs elate.

From God the Father He proceeds ;
To God the Father back He speeds :
Proceeds—as far as very hell ;
Speeds back—to light ineffable.

An early hymn, formerly erroneously ascribed to Ambrose, is interesting not only for its thought but because it is descriptive of the early ritual for candidates for baptism who were clothed in white, and to this the opening words refer. It will be noted also how the imagery of the Passover is applied to the Sacrifice of Christ. The following two verses will give some idea of its character. They are taken from Neale's translation :

The Lamb's high banquet we await,
In snow-white robes of royal state :
And now, the Red Sea's channel past,
To Christ our Prince we sing at last.

Now Christ, our Paschal Lamb, is slain,
The Lamb of God that knows no stain :
The true Oblation offer'd here,
Our own unleaven'd bread sincere.

In the middle of the fourth century there was born in Spain a lyrical poet who takes a high place

among the hymn-writers of the Church. This was Prudentius, whose hymns are much too long for ordinary worship, but selections from them have been thankfully included in the Church's service. For our purpose he is most important, as the whole of his poetry, as Raby says, "is coloured by doctrinal intention." In one long hymn he sets forth the Christ of theology as foreshown by the Prophets, as living His human life among men, working His miracles and deeds of kindness, and so right on through the story of the Passion to His coming again in judgment. His hymns, admirably translated by R. Martin Pope, are published in a volume of Dent's Temple Classics. Two verses from this version of the hymn just referred to may be quoted. It will be noted that the second verse contains a reference to the wounds of Christ, which became a favourite figure with hymn writers, recurring constantly in all languages, and most familiar to English readers in the lines of *Rock of Ages*.

Thine, O Christ, is endless sweetness ; Thou art our celestial Bread :
Nevermore he knoweth hunger, who upon Thy grace hath fed,
Grace whereby no mortal body but the soul is nourishèd.

Ah ! how wondrous was the fountain flowing from His piercèd side,
Whence the blood and water mingled in a strange and sacred tide—
Water, sign of mystic cleansing ; blood, the martyr's crown of pride.

Prudentius is a master of the use of Symbolism, and in this sense also he may be regarded as a pioneer. In one of his hymns he gives at length the account of Moses as a type of Christ, his priesthood, his work as a lawgiver, his deliverance of Israel from Egypt —even his outstretched arms as he prayed on the mountain are described as

Foreshadowing the Cross of Love.

In the first hymn a figure that seems very quaint to us was taken up again and again by later singers. It is that of the cock at dawn waking the sleeper being regarded as a symbol of Christ awaking the soul to life. One of the most delicious of the hymns that deal with this subject is most spiritedly translated by Neale in his *Mediæval Hymns*.[1] This quaint hymn dates from the fourteenth century, and in it the cock is made a monitor of the life of the true priest. The whole poem is so charming that we must refer our readers to the original, but one verse as a specimen of its quaintness may be quoted :

Cock, he findeth grains of wheat,
And his hens he calleth,
Giving to the dearer ones
What to each befalleth :
'Midst his people thus the clerk
Scripture nurture shareth,
And for sick, and poor, and maim'd
Providently careth.

[1] Op. cit., pp. 194–199.

" The crowning glory " of his verse was regarded by Trench as the hymn for the *Burial of the Dead.* It was designed to teach the great doctrine of the resurrection of the body and to bring comfort to those who were distressed, probably by the terrible deaths of many martyrs, and especially those whose bodies were destroyed by fire.

Even if, says Prudentius, the mortal dust is scattered to the four winds of heaven, still man will not perish utterly, God can build up for him a new body, and meanwhile the shining paths of Paradise will be open to the delivered spirit. The grave to him becomes not a place of terror but a place of hope, and so he concludes with the words, tender and exquisite in thought, and seeming to bring the old poet very near to our own day :

> But we will honour our dear dead
> With violets and garlands strown,
> And o'er the cold and graven stone
> Shall fragrant odours still be shed.

He wrote many hymns on the martyrs, and here also set the fashion for much subsequent poetry, as well as intensified the cult of worship at the graves of martyrs, the reverence for relics, and the practice of pilgrimages.

He deals also in these poems with the struggle against paganism which was still being waged even in Rome itself. He was a writer of other poems which were not hymns, and so we cannot deal with them here at any length, but they are important as revealing to us more of his thought. One of his

long poems is, in fact, a definite apology for Christianity against paganism.

In the short autobiographical poem that stands as a preface to his collected works, he expresses in a few lines the purpose of all his work :

Let each day link itself with grateful hymns
And every night re-echo songs of God :
Yea, be it mine to fight all heresies,
Unfold the meanings of the Catholic faith,
Trample on Gentile rites, thy gods, O Rome,
Dethrone, the marytrs laud, th' Apostles sing.

It may also be noted that Prudentius was a layman. "In all his poems," says Raby, "he assumes the position of a simple believer, but, like Dante, he had made deep, and, so far as a layman can judge, accurate theological studies."[1] One of his permanent contributions to the art of hymn-writing was his discovery of the value and significance of Christian allegory.

To Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers, who died in the year 600, and was all his life a friend of courts, we owe two of the most famous hymns of the Middle Ages. The motive of his great Passion hymn is discovered in two lines of an earlier poem, which read :

O strangely fertile, sweet and noble tree,
When on thy branches thy new fruit was borne.

The hymn itself is that known as the *Pange Lingua*. It consists of a song of victory upon

[1] Raby, op. cit., p. 69.

Christ's triumph on the Cross. The poet traces the Saviour from His cradle to Calvary, and then he bursts out in a passion of adoration :

Faithful Cross ! above all other,
One and only noble Tree !
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peers may be ;
Sweetest wood and sweetest iron,
Sweetest weight is hung on thee !

Thou alone wast counted worthy
This world's ransom to uphold ;
For a shipwrecked race preparing
Harbour, like the ark of old :
With the sacred blood anointed
From the smitten Lamb that rolled.

Readers may be reminded how strangely hymns link century to century and one section of the Church to another, by recalling the well-known hymn written by the Unitarian Sir John Bowring in 1825 :

In the Cross of Christ I glory.[1]

The second great hymn of Fortunatus is the *Vexilla regis*, parodied by Dante in the opening lines of the *Inferno*, Canto 34. It takes its place in the service-books as one of the great hymns of the Passion. It was written in praise of a relic of the true Cross, which Queen Rhadegund had received from the Emperor. Another interesting point

[1] See also the great *Sequence*, *Laudes crucis attollamus*, translated by Neale as, "Be the Cross our theme and story" (*Mediæval Hymns*, p. 139).

about the hymn is its reference to the reading, in certain manuscripts, of Psalm xcvi. 10 : " The Lord reigneth from the tree." This verse we may quote in the rendering of a seventeenth-century service-book :

> That which the Prophet-King of old
> Hath in mysterious verse foretold,
> Is now accomplisht, whilst we see
> God Ruling Nations from a Tree.

Another hymn by Fortunatus is dedicated to Easter, and in its original form began with a beautiful description of the Spring of the year, wherein the meadows are starred with flowers, and the eyes delighted with the fresh green of the fields. Even in the selection of verses retained by the Church there is one which has a beautiful reference to this season :

> Now with the Lord of new and heavenly birth,
> His gifts return to grace the springing earth.

From this time onwards the stream of Latin hymns broadens and deepens through the centuries, and many tributaries flow into it from all the countries in which the Latin language was employed in the Church ritual. It is quite impossible, in the space at our disposal, to follow in chronological order the detailed story, nor is such examination necessary for our purpose. What chiefly concerns us is to trace the reflection of Church teaching in the hymns, and to note in particular the manner in which the Church hymn writers represented these leading truths. It was the genius of the Latin

thought to translate theological values in terms of personal feeling, and to represent the reaction of the individual minds of the writers to the doctrines they taught. The body of Latin hymnology is an immense one, and we must satisfy ourselves in the main with some of the great representative writers whose hymns have secured a place in the Church service-books. From the fifth century comes a hymn by Sedulius which consists of a devout description of the life of Christ, written in the form of an acrostic, each verse beginning with a letter of the Latin alphabet. Thus its opening line is :

A solis ortus cardine.

The first line of the second stanza is :

Beatus auctor sæculi

and so forth. We shall quote here (from the English version by Neale) only the verse that, in the original, begins with the letter " I." It will serve as an example of the simplicity and directness of the poem :

To greet His birth the wise men went,
Led by the star before them sent :
Called on by light, towards light they pressed,
And by their gifts their God confess'd.

Several hymns are attributed to Pope Gregory the Great, though it is very doubtful whether his authorship of any of them can be certified. They are simple and direct, but not very poetical in thought or form. The following verse in one of

them connects the doctrine of the Trinity with the fast of Lent :

Grant, O Thou Blessed Trinity,
Grant, O Essential Unity,
That this our fast of forty days
May work our profit and Thy praise !

A famous hymn is that composed by Theodulph of Orleans, about whose origin a beautiful story is told, attributing the author's liberation from prison to the King's delight in hearing the verses for the first time. From the ninth century onwards it has been a hymn reserved for Palm Sunday, and its charm and simplicity make it as delightful to-day as when it was first composed. It is well known in its English version in many hymn-books beginning :

All glory, laud, and honour,
To Thee, Redeemer, King,
To Whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.

Neale reminds us that there was a quaint verse contained in the hymn which remained in ritual use till the seventeenth century. Under its quaintness we can see the desire of the writer, which was typical of many of his fellows, to make practical use of every incident in the gospel story. The words run as follows :

Be Thou, O Lord, the Rider,
And we the little ass ;
That to God's holy city
Together we may pass.

One of the most famous hymns of the Latin Church must remain anonymous as none of the suggestions as to authorship can be taken as satisfactorily proved. It is the *Veni Creator Spiritus*—the lovely and tender address to the Holy Spirit. It began as a hymn for use at Pentecost, and then most naturally was included in the service for the ordination of priests. The hymn is so well known that it does not require quotation, but we may note how skilfully and with what beauty the concluding verses set forth the doctrine of the Trinity, and include the Western form of the Holy Spirit's origin :

> Teach us to know the Father, Son,
> And Thee, of Both, to be but One ;
>
> That through the ages all along
> This may be our endless song.
>
> Praise to Thy eternal merit,
> Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

It is remarkable that the second great hymn on the same topic, dating from several centuries later, should also be anonymous. In the estimate of Archbishop Trench it is the loveliest of all the hymns in the whole circle of Latin sacred poetry. A sixteenth-century writer remarks that it could only have been written if the Holy Spirit Himself inspired the writer. This is the hymn known as the *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, and is probably best known in Caswall's translation. It is specially noteworthy that the writer indicates the whole dependence of

man for his purity upon the Divine Spirit's help, as in the lines :

If Thou take Thy grace away,
Nothing pure in man will stay,
All his good is turned to ill.

Reference has already been made to the importance of *Sequences*, and when we come to the ninth century and the work of Notker we have the first specimens of this particular form of hymn. About fifty may be attributed with certainty to his pen, and with considerable probability nearly seventy. Out of this large number we can only deal with one or two that are typical and germane to our purpose. Probably it would be best to speak first of one which deals with the subject we have just been considering, namely, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and two stanzas translated by Calverley may be given here as indicative of the way in which he treats the topic :

Thou that purifiest all things, as none else beside
Thee can,
Purify the clouded eyesight, Spirit, of our inner
man ;

That by us our Heavenly Father may at last be seen
and known :
For the pure in heart shall see Him, and the pure in
heart alone.

Another covers the whole life of Jesus and skilfully presents the main theme of the Incarnation in a hymn designed for Easter. Two verses will serve

to show the manner in which the poet accomplishes his task, while the further two verses quoted are noteworthy and exceptional in recognizing the sympathy of Nature in the poet's imagination with her risen Lord :

Yet oft beneath that humble guise
The Godhead flashed on mortal eyes,
By many a speech and many a sign :
Sick healed, and water turned to wine,
The leper cleansed, the dead restored,
The blind eyes looking on their Lord.

He feeds the hungry crowd with bread,
His feet upon the rough waves tread,
He stills the winds, and at His word
Deaf ears the voice of love have heard :
And then, thus proved of boundless power,
He passes to His passion-hour.

In wondrous ways to eye and heart
He doth His risen self impart :
In that new life so full, so rare,
All things that live may claim their share ;
Flowers round His glorious footprints spring,
Birds chant the praises of the King.

The lights that rule the night and day,
Shine now with brighter, purer ray ;
The earth, that trembled to her deep,
Her blossoms on His path doth heap ;
Stars, sea, and shore have found a voice,
And cry aloud, Rejoice! Rejoice!

Perhaps the most famous of all his sequences is one that is translated by Luther and is eloquent of the mediæval thought of the uncertainty of human life and of the way in which we are constantly compassed by death. An admirable paraphrase of it was written by Bonar.

In midst of this our life
We are begirt with death—
Our life is but a breath!

To whom, then, shall we come,
Save, Lord, alone to Thee,
In our mortality?

To whom save Thee, O Lord,
Who, at our grievous sin,
Justly hast angry been?

O holy, holy God,
O holy majesty,
Jehovah, God most high,

O holy, holy God,
O holy God above,
O holy God of love,

O Saviour of the lost,
From second death us save,
And from the endless grave!

About the same time as sequences originated, another attempt was made to introduce a popular element into the services of the Church by the invention of what were termed *Tropes*. These were

slightly dramatic questions and answers, illustrating words from the Scriptures that indicated such great doctrines as the Incarnation or the Resurrection.

Here, for instance, is a rendering of one of them that was used at Easter :

Whom do you seek in the sepulchre,
O Christian folk ?
Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified,
O ye inhabitants of heaven.
He is not here, He is risen as He foretold.
Go tell the news because He has arisen.
Alleluia, the Lord has risen ;
To-day the Strong Lion, the Son of God,
has risen from the dead.
Thanks be to God. Tell forth the words,
I have risen and am still with you.

At a later time these tropes developed into rhyming forms, and were sometimes dramatically represented, and so became one of the origins of the Mystery Plays. From the same period comes one of the earliest and most beautiful of the hymns to the Virgin, a type of devotion that became an increasingly common feature of the Latin ritual. The first and sixth verses of the hymn, as rendered by Caswall, read as follows :

Hail, Ocean Star !
Dear Mother of our God !
Hail, O thou Virgin evermore !
Of Paradise the blissful door !
Hail, Mary, hail !

Be thou the guide
Of all our life, we pray ;
Till in thy bosom safe we rest,
With Christ's eternal vision blest ;
Hail, Mary, hail !

Two other hymns to the Virgin, dating from the same period and sometimes attributed to the same author, are the *Alma Redemptoris*, referred to by Chaucer in his Prioress's Tale ; and the *Salve Regina*, perhaps the most famous and beautiful of all. It begins thus in a seventeenth-century translation :

Hail to the Queen that reigns above the sky,
Hail to the Mother of true clemency !
Hail life, hail sweetness, and our hope to you,
We that are Eva's exiled children sue ;
In cries and groans, which, from this vale of tears,
Are fann'd with sighs up to your sacred ears.

With the name of Peter Damien, of Ravenna, the austere reformer of the eleventh century as he has been termed, we come to the author of two hymns which formed models for many later writers. The first dealt with the glory and joys of Paradise, and is known as the *Ad Perennis Vitæ Fontem*. This type of hymn was a natural outcome of monastic meditation upon the life beyond the grave, based on the vision of the exile on Patmos. Such hymns were very popular, and the earlier ones are much more virile than such sugary sweetness and sentimentality as is to be found, for example, in Faber's hymn :

O Paradise ! O Paradise !
Who doth not crave for rest ?

Two verses from Damien's hymn in Caswall's translation will give some idea of its beauty :

There no stormy winter rages ;
There no scorching summer glows ;
But through one perennial springtide,
Blooms the lily with the rose ;
Bloom the myrrh and balsam sweet,
With the fadeless violet.

There they eat the Bread of Heaven !
There they drink of life their fill !
There insatiate ever feasting,
Feel a thirst and hunger still ;
Hunger, which itself is sweet ;
Thirst, with endless joys replete !

Another famous hymn of the same order is the *Urbs beata Hierusalem*, an anonymous production of the sixth or seventh century. This is well known in modern hymn-books, usually in Neale's translation beginning :

Blessed City, Heavenly Salem.

Best known of all such hymns is the *Hora Novissima* by Bernard of Cluny. This is a selection from his long poem on "The Contempt of the World." Bernard's own statement of the subject-matter of his poem is that it deals with the advent of Christ in judgment, the joys of the saints and the pains of the rejected. His design is to teach men to despise the things of this world and to seek the

things which are God's. By his description of the Advent he seeks to render men earnest, and by his description of the joys of Paradise to render them docile. The best-known section of the hymn is that beginning in English :

Jerusalem the golden,

but the whole poem must be carefully studied if one would grasp its real significance. Let us take, for example, a few lines which set forth the meaning of the name of Jesus in some such manner as we have already found it treated in other hymns. Here His name appears as the very centre of the glory and joy of heaven :

Jesus, the Gem of Beauty,
True God and Man, they sing :
The never-failing Garden,
The ever-golden Ring :
The Door, the Pledge, the Husband,
The guardian of His Court :
The Day-star of Salvation,
The Porter and the Port.

Closely connected with Damien's hymn, of which it seems to be a kind of paraphrase, is the popular English hymn dating from the sixteenth century beginning :

Hierusalem, my happie home,

whose delightful quaintness is a never-ceasing joy to those who know it. Let us quote one or two of the less known verses as specimens :

Within thy gates nothinge doeth come
That is not passinge cleane,
Noe spiders web, noe durt, noe dust,
Noe filthe may there be seene.

There David standes with harpe in hand
As maister of the Queere,
Tenne thousand times that man were blest
That might this musicke hear.

Te Deum doth Sant Ambrose singe
Saint Augustine dothe the like
Ould Simeon and Zacharie
Haue not their songes to seeke.

Of Peter Damien's other hymn, *Gravi me terrore pulsas*, which Neale styles "The *Dies Irae* of the individual life," we need only say it is a soul-moving description of the day of death, and an eager prayer for the mercy of Christ. We have already seen how Bernard's hymn treats in its beginning of the same subject, but he passes from the individual thought of death to the more general aspect of the Last Judgment.

It begins with the familiar words :

The world is very evil ;
The times are waxing late.

But the hymn that deals with this subject in the most tremendous fashion is the *Dies Irae*—probably the work of Thomas of Celano, the biographer of St. Francis. From the terror and gloom of the Judgment the writer turns to the thought of the Redeemer's mercy, and, though the whole hymn is

written in an atmosphere of intense gloom, it ends in a note of confidence, as will be seen from the closing lines :

> Ah ! that day of tears and mourning !
> From the dust of earth returning
> Man for judgment must prepare him ;
> Spare, O God, in mercy spare him !
> Lord, all-pitying, Jesu Blest,
> Grant them Thine eternal rest.

The name of the famous lover Abelard is to be reckoned among the hymn-writers of the twelfth century, and he is to be given a special position because of the originality of his verse-forms and the fact that his hymns were daily sung in the nunnery presided over by Heloise. It was at her request that he composed his hymns, which were designed to cover the cycle of the year. They have not, however, any originality of teaching and so we need not stay upon them in this place. Suffice it to say that one of the loveliest is a hymn dealing with the endless Sabbath of the Heavenly City, which reminds us, in part, of the lines in the old-fashioned English hymn :[1]

[1] Two verses, in an English rendering, of Abelard's hymn will show the closeness of resemblance :

> O how great and grand the Sabbaths
> In those heavenly courts above ;
> Weary resting, heroes crowning,
> In such gifts God shows His love.
>
> There will Sabbath follow Sabbath
> In unending songs of praise,
> Where the Sabbath-keepers ceaseless
> Songs with angels still shall raise.

Where congregations ne'er break up,
And sabbaths have no end.

In Bernard of Clairvaux we have "the mightiest spiritual and political figure of the first half of the twelfth century." He was a mystic, and gravely distrusted both philosophers and theologians. To him, as to Burns,

The heart aye's the part aye
That makes us right or wrang.

To him spiritual principles were the guides in all the affairs of life. "While Francis moved the hearts of the people like Jesus," says Raby, "Bernard was rather another Ambrose, a terror to evil-doers and heretics, and a doctor whose lips distilled honey. But Bernard and Francis both brought a new personal element into Catholicism, a mysticism based on the direct experience of God's love as revealed in His Son. . . . They had rediscovered in the Saviour a human figure who was the centre of the Christian hope." [1] In one of his sermons Bernard says: "Jesus is honey to the lips, in the ear melody, in the heart joy. Medicine also is that name. Is any sad? Let Jesus come into his heart, and thence leap to his tongue. . . . For when I name Jesus, I set before me a man meek and lowly of heart, kind, sober, chaste, merciful, and adorned with all grace and holiness, and, at the same time, God's Self the Almighty, who makes me whole by His example, and strong by His aid." [2]

[1] Raby, op. cit., p. 328.
[2] Bernard, *Sermo* xv, Migne, col. 847, quoted by Raby, op. cit., p. 329.

It is this faith of Bernard that is revealed in the familiar hymn, "Jesus the very thought of Thee."[1] The whole hymn, from which well-known extracts are taken, is very long and in its excess of feeling somewhat monotonous. Its metaphors are frequently derived from Bernard's favourite book, the *Song of Songs*, and are luscious to a degree that is apt to nauseate a modern reader, as the following verse will show:

Thy kiss is bliss beyond compare,
A bliss for evermore;
O, that Thy visits were less rare,
And not so quickly o'er!

With the Abbey of St. Victor in Paris is associated the name of the great hymn writer Adam, who is always known by the addition to his Christian name of the abbey to which he belonged. He was a keen student of theology, and his poems are full of the symbolic interpretations which were the fashion of his age. A very large number of hymns came from his pen, and they are all important to the student of the period. They are generally too long for quotation and yet nothing but quotation would give much idea of his method. Thus, for example, in the great hymn on Easter, *Zyma Vetus Expurgetur*, he uses the following as types of our Lord's Resurrection: Isaac, whose name meant laughter, signifies the joy of life; Joseph in his escape from prison

[1] Recent researches have shown that this hymn can no longer be assigned to Bernard, though the author is unknown. It may be the work of a woman, but it certainly reflects Bernard's thought and may be taken as representative of his spirit.

suggests Christ's rising from the grave; the serpent that sprang from Aaron's rod and devoured the other serpents is typical of Christ's conquest over death and hell. Even the question put to Job, "Canst thou draw out Leviathan with a hook?" is made typical of Christ's power to capture Satan.[1] We need not go farther through the list of types, but the student will find them interesting if the complete hymn is carefully read. Another very curious and elaborate symbolism is contained in one of the Christmas hymns, *Splendor Patris et Figura*, three verses of which are devoted to the symbolism of the nut. In itself the nut represents Jesus Christ; the bitter hull, the Cross; the shell, His Body; and the fruit His Godhead. But again, the nut is typical of Christ in the benefits it gives—oil, light, and nourishment.

From another of his hymns, that upon the evangelists, we can choose a single verse which shows his use of symbol. In this case he is using the well-known symbols of each evangelist to suggest four elements in the nature and work of Christ:

> These four writers in portraying
> Christ, His fourfold acts displaying,
> Show Him—thou hast heard the saying—
> Each of them distinctively:

[1] This very extraordinary idea is found frequently in old hymns. Perhaps its shortest and most distinct statement is in an epigram by Hildebert quoted by Neale in his *Mediæval Hymns*, p. 123:

> Fisher, the Father is: this world, the sea;
> Christ's flesh the bait, the Hook His Deity,
> The line His generation. Satan took
> The offered bait; and perished by the hook.

Man—of woman generated ;
Ox—in offering dedicated ;
Lion—having death defeated ;
Eagle—mounting to the sky.

Many of Adam's hymns are dedicated to the memory of saints, and several to the Virgin. He thus set his seal upon, and gave a brilliant example to, the hymn writers who continued to produce hymns to the saints and to Mary. The closing verse of one of the most beautiful to the Virgin may be quoted as an example of his best manner :

Hail the firmament's bright glory !
On our dark minds, we implore thee,
From above thy rays pour down ;
Calm the sea, thou Star of Ocean !
Lest amidst the storm's commotion
And wild adverse winds we drown !
" Amen," say ye every one !

We must remember that the writers of Adam's school used Old Testament symbolism just as freely to describe the Virgin as they did to describe Christ. A full list of these with illustrations will be found in Raby's *History of Christian-Latin Poetry*, pp. 369–375, but we may mention two or three of them here. The Burning Bush was typical of the Holy Spirit's action in generating Jesus. Aaron's rod was typical of the Virgin herself, who brought forth the Lord by mystical power. Gideon's fleece symbolized her virginity, as did also the Closed Door of Ezekiel.

It was the faith of the mediævalists, as Raby says,

that "the swiftest way for a prayer to reach its goal was by an appeal to the womanly sympathy of the Queen of Heaven."

Dante's great master in theology and the author of the most authoritative statement of Catholic philosophy, one of the profoundest minds and clearest intellects of the Middle Ages—Thomas Aquinas—is also to be found in the ranks of hymn writers. Almost all his hymns are doctrinal, and the most famous of them deal with the doctrine of the Real Presence. The *Lauda, Sion, Salvatorem* is one of the most important, for in two of its stanzas the theory of transubstantiation is clearly set forth, and it will be noticed that the last line implies the refusal of the cup to the laity. The two important stanzas run as follows, in Oakeley's translation:

Beneath two differing species
(Signs only, not their substances)
  Lie mysteries deep and rare;
His Flesh the meat, the drink His Blood,
Yet Christ entire, our heavenly food,
  Beneath each kind is there.

Nor be thy faith confounded, though
The Sacrament be broke; for know,
The life which in the whole doth glow,
  In every part remains;
The Spirit which those portions hide
No force can cleave; we but divide
The sign, the while the Signified
  Nor change nor loss sustains.

In another verse of the same hymn he expounds his doctrine that the true body and blood of Christ can only be apprehended by faith:

Wondrous Myst'ry we inherit!
Bread His Flesh, in truth and spirit,
And the Wine His precious Blood.
What nor sense nor sight conceiveth,
That a living faith believeth,
Wrought in new and wondrous mode.

"This is doubtless," says Raby, "the supreme dogmatic poem of the Middle Ages; it never wanders from the correct scholastic terminology, *res* and *signa* are used in the sense of the *Summa*; the thought is hard and closely woven, but it is a poem as well as a dogmatic exposition. The verses have an austerity and grandeur which no Latin poet of the Middle Ages ever equalled." [1]

Another hymn which deals with the same subject and is imitated from the hymn of Fortunatus quoted earlier in this chapter, is the *Pange Lingua Gloriosi*. It is more popular than the former one, but a quotation of the relevant verse on the Sacrament shows how closely it presents the same idea:

Word made Flesh, by Word He maketh
Very Bread His Flesh to be;
Man in wine Christ's Blood partaketh,
And, if senses fail to see,
Faith alone the true heart waketh
To behold the Mystery.

[1] Raby, op. cit., p. 408.

Another of Thomas's hymns begins also with the first line of an earlier hymn. It is the *Verbum supernum prodiens*, and the Sacramental verse we shall again quote :

He gave Himself in either kind,
His precious Flesh ; His precious Blood :
Of flesh and blood is man combined,
And He of man would be the food.

We may take leave of the Latin hymns of the Middle Ages by a reference to two that are very widely known and both springing from the ranks of the Franciscans. First, there is the great hymn of praise by Francis himself, wherein he calls on all created things and even death itself to praise God. And, secondly, there is the tender and pathetic *Stabat Mater*, which presents to us the sorrow of the Virgin and the identification of the singer with her grief and in the longing, through her mediation, to be made a sharer in the redemption of Christ.

CHAPTER V

HYMNS OF THE NEW LIBERTY

When we turn to the consideration of the hymns that were the fruit of the Reformation in Europe, we discover in them two new features. First, they are composed in the vernacular so that all may understand what they sing, and be able to join in the worship and not leave it to priests and choristers. Secondly, the hymns are the expression of personal religious experience, and reveal a much more individualistic attitude than do the hymns of the Latin Church. They indicate besides the new belief in the possibility of each worshipper coming into direct contact with God, independent of any priest as mediator.

The earliest form of popular hymns seems to have been what were called *Leichen*, or *Leisen*, derived from the response in the Latin Church, *Kyrie Eleison*. These were used not in the ordinary service of the Mass, but on popular festivals. A verse of one of them, in honour of St. Peter, will indicate their form :

Let us to God's servant pray,
All, with loudest voice to-day,
That our souls which else were lost
May dwell among the heavenly host :
Kyrie eleison !
Christe eleison !

Many of the great Latin hymns referred to in the last chapter were translated into German, some of them by Luther himself, and there were hymns in which both languages were mingled. One of the best-known examples is the old Christmas carol dating from the fourteenth century. The first verse will suffice to show its construction :

In dulci jubilo
Sing and shout all below !
He for whom we're pining
Lies in præsepio ;
Like the sun is shining
Matris in gremio,
Qui est A et O
Qui est A et O.

Tauler, the well-known Dominican preacher and mystic of Strassburg, was the author of several hymns which have remained among the treasures of the Christian Church. Perhaps the best known is his symbolical carol for Christmas :

A ship comes sailing onwards
With a precious freight on board ;
It bears the only Son of God,
It bears the Eternal Word.

After describing the effect of the Incarnation it closes as follows :

Who e'er would hope in gladness
To kiss this Holy Child,
Must suffer many a pain and woe
Patient like Him and mild ;

Must die with Him to evil,
And rise to righteousness,
That so with Christ he too may share
Eternal life and bliss.

Another beautiful hymn of his is addressed to Jesus Christ, and is full of Tauler's own peculiar teaching of the abandonment of self-will and the entire yielding of the personality to God's indwelling spirit. Four lines from the middle of the hymn will reveal its simple evangelical directness :

Have inward oneness, Faith's clear sight
Bid all distracting forms take flight,
Gaze on Christ's image day and night,
Then He is thine below.

Many of the early hymns, after the example of the Latin ones, were addressed to Mary and the Saints, and one of the best-known of these was altered by Hans Sachs of Nuremburg from an address to Mary to an address to Christ, an alteration typical of the new religious devotion of the Reformation. Dr. Schaff holds that in a strict sense the Church hymn "as a popular religious lyric in praise of God to be sung by the congregation in public worship was born with the German Reformation." He reckons that the total number of German hymns cannot be less than 100,000, the largest number to be found in any language. "These hymns," he says, "constitute a most graphic book of confession for German evangelical Christianity, a sacred band which enriches its

various periods, an abiding memorial of its victories, its sorrows and its joys, a clear mirror showing its deepest experiences, and an eloquent witness for the all-conquering and invincible life-power of the evangelical Christian faith." [1]

Of Martin Luther's best-known hymns there is no need to speak here, but, amongst the others, one or two must be carefully noted. He wrote a verse paraphrase of the Nicene Creed designed for use in morning worship, and it played a very important part in the doctrinal teaching of the Reformation Churches. The second verse will suffice to show how he performed his task:

And we believe in Jesus Christ,
His Only Son, our Lord, possessing
An equal Godhead, throne and might,
Through whom descends the Father's blessing;
Conceived of the Holy Spirit,
Born of Mary, virgin mother;
That lost man might life inherit
Made true man, our Elder Brother,
Was crucified for sinful men,
And raised by God to life again.

Another great hymn, that was credited with winning hundreds to the new faith, also came from Luther's pen. It is said that on one occasion a number of princes belonging to the Reformed Faith were assembled in St. Bartholomew's Church, Frankfurt, when a Roman Catholic priest preached his own doctrine. After some time the assembly

[1] Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology*, p. 412.

rose and sang this hymn, till the priest was compelled to escape. It is both of autobiographical and doctrinal significance. As we read its opening verses we can understand how it reflects the experiences of his early life. It then passes on to describe God's longing love for the world and the joyful acceptance by Christ of His mission. Christ is then introduced as speaking to the hymn writer himself and says :

For I am with thee, thou art Mine,
Henceforth My place is also thine,
The foe shall never part us.

I know that he will shed My blood,
And take My life away ;
But I will bear it for thy good,
Only believe alway ;

Death swallows up this life of Mine,
My innocence all sins of thine,
And so art thou delivered.

One of Luther's hymns was specially designed as a prayer against the Pope and the Turks, whom it will be remembered Luther considered as the very forefront of the enemy. " The spirit or soul of Anti-Christ," he said, " is the Pope, his flesh or body the Turk." The hymn begins :

Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word ;
Curb those who fain by craft or sword
Would wrest the Kingdom from Thy Son,
And set at naught all He hath done.

Luther's friend, Justus Jonas, carried on the tradition, and, like Luther, paraphrased a great Psalm, cxxiv. One verse will show how it was a paraphrase brought up to date to suit the Reformer's circumstances :

They call us heretics, and lie
In wait to spill our blood ;
Yet flaunt their Christian name on high,
And boast they worship God.
Ah God ! that precious name of Thine
O'er many a wicked deed must shine,
But Thou wilt once avenge it.

Another member of the circle headed by Luther and Melanchthon was Paul Eber, and from passages from two of his hymns we notice aspects of doctrine which became very prominent in later devotional poetry. The first passage quoted shows the absolute dependence of the Christian soul for salvation upon the word of Christ :

In truth I tell you, who receives
My word, and keeps it, and believes,
Shall never fall God's wrath beneath,
Shall never taste eternal death ;
Though here on earth, in time, he die,
He is not therefore lost.

The second passage was the obvious origin of Zinzendorf's well-known hymn :

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness,

and the first line should really read :

I fall asleep in Jesus' wounds.

This kind of language became common not only in the later pietistic hymns, particularly Moravian, but also in many types of Roman Catholic devotion. With this explanation we may now quote the first verse of Eber's hymn in Miss Winkworth's paraphrase :

I fall asleep in Jesu's arms,
Sin washed away, hushed all alarms,
For His dear blood, His righteousness,
My jewels are, my glorious dress,
Wherein before my God I stand
When I shall reach the heavenly land.

Hans Sachs, the famous shoemaker of Nuremburg, known to many who have never read a line of his works, from Wagner's opera, also comes into the ranks of hymn writers. One of his poems sets forth in clear and popular terms the new message, and reveals to us the consciousness of struggle that was present to the thought of all the Reformers at that time, and yet it is full of joy and gladness in the sense of the new-found liberty. Two verses will suffice to show both these effects :

For conscience lay oppressed and bound
  By bans and men's commands,
Soul-traps and nets were all around ;
  But now o'er German lands,
Behold the sun is risen,
  And those foul shapes were ghosts and lies,
And dare to burst their prison.

. . . . .

Trust thou in flattering tongues no more,
Though many they may be ;
All human teachings dread thou sore,
Though good they seem to thee ;
But put thy whole affiance
In God's good-will and holy Word,
There is our one reliance.

These hymn writers had already struck the notes which remain permanent throughout the hymns of the Reformation, and are to be discovered as the dominant tones in the vast mass of material that was poured out almost continuously for three centuries. It is obviously impossible to follow it any farther in detail. The most we can do is to give illustrations from some of the leading writers of the main trend of ideas.

All the Reformers centred the thoughts of the worshippers upon Jesus as the one Mediator and the sole way of access to God. This, of course, was controversial in the sense that it opposed the Roman doctrine of the intercession of priests and saints, but it was evangelical in the sense that it brought men back to the New Testament, which Luther had put once more into every one's hand, and set forth the great message of the Gospel, " Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden." The twofold aspect of the message was in Luther's popular tractate, *The Freedom of the Christian Man*, wherein he set forth the readiness of access to the written Word of God, and through the Word the discovery of Jesus Christ as Saviour.

This truth was put in another hymn by Sachs :

Fullness of grace is in Thy Word ;
The Life, the Truth, the Way
To life eternal art Thou Lord ;
To Thee alone we pray.

One of the early hymn writers was Schneesing, and the first verse of his most famous hymn sets forth very clearly the truth we have been describing :

Lord Jesus Christ, in Thee alone
My hope on earth I place ;
For other comforter is none,
Nor help save in Thy grace.
There is no man nor creature here,
No angel in the heavenly sphere,
Who at my need can succour me ;
I cry to Thee,
For Thou canst end my misery.

Luther's biographer, Mathesius, most famous for a lovely cradle-song and a hymn for miners, also wrote a fine morning hymn, the last verse of which sets forth the new-found joy of trust in God in all the common things of life :

Amen ! I say, not fearing
That God rejects my prayer,
I doubt not He is hearing
And granting me His care ;
And so I go my way,
And joyfully put forth my hands
To do the work that He commands,
And serve Him through the day.

A doctrinal hymn by Speratus is said to have been a great favourite of Luther's, and it has been called "the poetical counterpart of Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans." Miss Winkworth says it "sounds like a bit out of the Augsburg Confession done into rhyme." It is certainly very formal and theological, but for that very reason of the more value for our purpose. Two verses will suffice to show its character :

Christ, having all the law fulfill'd,
Through His blest cross and passion,
Is now the Rock whereon we build
Our faith and whole salvation :
We call Him Lord our Righteousness,
Whose death hath purchas'd life and grace,
And ransom'd us for ever.

. . . . .

True faith, by Jesus in us wrought,
By works is manifested ;
That faith is empty, which is not
By works of love attested :
Yet faith alone us justifies ;
Love to our neighbour but implies,
We are sincere believers.

The great series of German hymns on the name of Jesus, which reveal the tenderness and passion of the soul's devotion to the Saviour, was begun by Philip Nicolai, who wrote his most famous hymns during a terrible pestilence in Westphalia in 1597. As in the Latin hymns associated with the name of Bernard,

these writers were largely indebted to the mystical interpretation of the *Song of Songs*. The whole hymn will be found in Miss Winkworth's *Christian Singers of Germany*, page 160. We have here only space for one verse :

O King high-born, Pearl hardly won,
True Son of God and Mary's Son,
  Crown of exceeding glory !
My heart calls Thee a Lily, Lord,
Pure milk and honey is Thy Word,
  Thy sweetest gospel-story.
Rose of Sharon, hail ! Hosanna !
  Heavenly Manna,
  Feed us ever ;
Lord, I can forget Thee never !

Franck, Burgomaster of Guben in the seventeenth century, follows in the same tradition, and of one of his hymns we give the closing verse :

Hence, all fears and sadness,
For the Lord of gladness,
  Jesus, enters in ;
They who love the Father,
Though the storms may gather,
  Still have peace within ;
Yea, whate'er I here must bear,
Still in Thee lies purest pleasure,
Jesu, priceless treasure !

From the Princess Luise Henriette comes the next of these hymns. She was a friend of Gerhardt

and sought to promote peace between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches. The hymn is supposed to have been written when she was only twenty-two years of age and after the death of her first child. It is a hymn of strong faith in Jesus and also full of confidence in the Resurrection and in the Eternal Presence of Christ. In the verse quoted it will be noticed how the writer makes reference to the famous saying in the Book of Job.[1] The hymn begins :

Jesus meine Zuversicht

A stanza from the middle of the hymn follows :

Then these eyes my Lord shall know,
My Redeemer and my Brother ;
In His love my soul shall glow,—
I myself, and not another !
Then from this rejoicing heart
Every weakness shall depart.

The next writer to whom we can refer is one of the most famous of the mystical hymn writers of Germany. He is best known by the Latin name he adopted in later life, Angelus Silesius, though his real name was Johann Scheffler. Brought up a Lutheran, he was greatly influenced by the writings of the mystics, and at about the age of thirty joined the Roman communion. At a later period he became a Franciscan and died in the monastery at Breslau. The prayer that was upon his lips constantly during his last illness is exactly on the lines of

[1] Job xix. 25–27.

many of his hymns and is an excellent instance of the type of thought we are here considering: "Jesus and Christ, God and Man, Bridegroom and Brother, Peace and Joy, Sweetness and Pleasure, Refuge and Redemption, Heaven and Earth, Eternity and Time, Love and All, receive my soul." One of his loveliest hymns is a comparison of the fairness of Christ to all the beauties of the world of Nature. It is original and full of charm, and stands out with a unique individuality among all the hymns of its class. Two verses must here suffice:

Sweetly sings the nightingale,
Sweet the flute's soft plaintive tale,
Sweeter than their richest tone,
Is the name of Mary's Son.

Sweetly all the air is stirr'd
When the echo's call is heard;
But no sounds my heart rejoice
Like to my Beloved's voice.

Another beautiful hymn of the same order is his

Morgenstern der finstern nacht.

Among the many hymns of the pietistic period, dating from the latter half of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth, we have an increasingly large number that deal with the thought of the nature and person of Christ in His relation to the believer. One of these, by Schröder, is famous for various reasons, but a special point for our

purpose is that in four successive verses it deals with Christ's wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. These are too long to quote in their entirety, but the first of them will show how the poet accomplishes his task. The whole hymn may be found translated in Schaff's *Christ in Song*, pp. 327–329 :

Wisdom's highest, noblest treasure,
Jesu ! lies concealed in Thee ;
Grant that this may still the measure
Of my will and actions be.
Humility there, and simplicity, reigning,
My steps shall in wisdom for ever be training ;
Oh ! if I of Christ have this knowledge divine,
The fullness of heavenly *wisdom* is mine.

Laurenti wrote a number of excellent hymns, and one, both from the point of view of its doctrine and its poetry, is extremely interesting. The first verse will show its character, but the whole hymn deserves careful study :

O Thou Essential Word,
Who wast from the beginning
With God, for Thou wast God ;
Thou hope of all the sinning,
Chosen to save our race,
Welcome indeed Thou art,
Redeemer, Fount of Grace,
To this my longing heart.

Lange, who was much better known as a theologian and commentator than a hymn writer, has,

however, one hymn on this topic that is worth remembering. It begins as follows :

Jesus, Thy light again I view,
Again Thy loving-kindness prove,
And all within me pants anew
T'enjoy Thy all-reviving love :
Again my thoughts to Thee aspire,
Unto Thy name is my desire.

Dessler, a schoolmaster of Nuremburg, contributed over 100 hymns, and three of his best have been translated by Miss Winkworth in her *Lyra Germanica*. They are all admirable and would be worth quoting in full, but we must content ourselves with the opening line of two of them and a verse of the third. The first is :

I will not let Thee go ; Thou Help in time of need !

The second is :

My Jesus, if the Seraphim.

The third is :

O Friend of souls, how well is me.

Of this hymn we quote the second verse :

The world may call herself my foe,
So be it ; for I trust her not,
E'en though a friendly face she show,
And with her bounties heap my lot.

In Thee alone will I rejoice,
Thou art the Friend, Lord, of my choice,
For Thou art true when friendships fail;
'Mid storms of woe Thy truth is still
My anchor; hate me as it will,
The world shall o'er me ne'er prevail.

The best known to English readers of Moravian hymn-writers is the Count von Zinzendorf, and his favourite hymn on the topic under consideration, and one of the best of its class, is :

Jesus still lead on.

One of his friends and contemporaries was Christian Gregor, whose hymn

Ach mein Herr Jesu ! dein Nahesein

is characterized by Schaff as "one of the sweetest hymns from the holy of holies of the believer's personal communion with his Saviour, and very characteristic of Moravian piety in its best form." One verse will show its character :

We see not with our eyes Thy friendly face,
So full of kindness, love, and gentle grace;
But in our hearts we know that Thou art here,
For Thou canst make us feel Thy presence near,
Although unseen.

Rendered very familar to English worshippers through John Wesley is the name of Tersteegen,

whose mystical type of thought and independent attitude toward the Reformed Church of his day rendered him in great spiritual sympathy with the Methodists. His hymns reveal his particular type of religion, dealing mainly with the inner union of the soul with the Redeemer; with renunciation of the world and with self, and with the effort to live constantly in the Divine Presence, as seeing Him who is invisible. In this present connexion we may take two or three examples. The first is from a hymn on temptations:

Jesu, mein Erbarmer! höre

Thou, my God and King, hast known me,
Yet hast shown me
True and loving is Thy will;
Though my heart from Thee oft ranges,
Through its changes,
Lord, Thy love is faithful still.

The second quotation is from a beautiful hymn on the name of Jesus:

Jesu's name, thou highest name,
  At which all creation bows—
Which from God the Father came,
  And which to the Father draws—
In profound humility,
Lo! I sink upon the knee,
And with all the host above,
This great name adore and love!

Jesu's name, thou pearl divine,
  Precious art thou still to me!
Treasure, which I choose for mine,
  All I wish is found in Thee;
Grace and power, and holiness,
Life, and rest, and blessedness.
This dear name for ever new,
Shall my soul with joy bedew!

In the latter half of the eighteenth century a spirit of rationalism broke out over Germany, and its effect was reflected in many of the hymns that then appeared. Some were written in the effort to support this movement, while others of the older hymns were edited and altered to suit the prevailing views. Some writers of the period still maintained the old tradition, and two of them have hymns that deal with the relation between Jesus and His disciples, which are very well known to English readers. The first is Gellert's hymn:

Jesus lives, no longer now,

and the other, Lavater's

O Jesus Christ, grow Thou in me.

From the later German hymn writers two examples of the present theme may be given, and these must conclude our illustrations of it. The first is from a hymn by Arndt, who was a great admirer of the older German hymns and did what

he could to revive their use. The hymn from which the quotation is taken begins :

Ich weiss an wen ich glaube

It is the Dayspring from on high,
The adamantine Rock,
Whence never storm can make me fly,
That fears no earthquake's shock ;
My Jesus Christ, my sure Defence,
My Saviour and my Light,
That shines within, and scatters thence
Dark phantoms of the night.

The second is from Rückert, the closing verse of his exquisite hymn *Bethlehem and Calvary* :

O Heart, what helps it to adore
His Cradle where the sunrise glows ?
Or what avail to kneel before
The grave whence long ago He rose ?
That He should find in thee a birth,
That thou shouldst seek to die to earth
And live to Him ;—this, this must be
Thy Bethlehem and Calvary !

As might be expected, a large place is given in the hymns of the Reformation to the doctrine of justification by faith, preached by Luther. Any study of the great hymns of the period will reveal this, but a few examples will make more clear the manner in which the hymn writers presented it. The first quotation is a verse of Schröder's hymn

already quoted. In it we find the mention of the atoning blood that became a feature of evangelical doctrine in all countries and will be found constantly in English hymns even to the present day :

Christ, Thou art the sole oblation
That I'll bring before my God :
In His sight I've acceptation
Only through Thy streaming blood :
Immaculate *righteousness* now I've acquired,
Since Thou on the tree of the Cross hast expired :
The robe of Salvation for ever is mine ;
In this shall my faith through eternity shine.

More familiar is Rothe's hymn, paraphrased by John Wesley, beginning :

Now I have found the ground wherein.

The whole hymn expresses the idea in various forms, but the third verse will here suffice :

O Love, thou bottomless abyss !
My sins are swallowed up in Thee ;
Covered is my unrighteousness,
No spot of guilt remains in me ;
While Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries.

With rather more originality and a certain beauty of expression as to the contrast between the coldness of legalism and the warmth of faith, the following verse from a hymn by Möwes may be quoted :

Hallelujah ! I believe !
Sorrow's bitterness is o'er,
And affliction's heavy burden
Weighs my spirit down no more.

On the Cross the mystic writing
Now revealed before me lies,
And I read the words of comfort,
As a father, I chastise.

Our last example is taken from a long hymn by Gerhardt upon the Cross :

Yet Thou dost even for my sake
On Thee in love the burdens take
That weigh'd my spirit to the ground :
Yes, Thou art made a curse for me,
That I might yet be blest through Thee,
My healing in Thy wounds is found.

All English readers will be familiar with Gerhardt's other hymn in which the passion of gratitude for redemption is so poignantly expressed :

O Sacred head ! now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down.

It is natural that the hymns of the Reformation should deal, as did the Latin hymns, with the joy of the Resurrection and the bliss of heaven, but what is noteworthy about their treatment of these themes is that no longer are the hymns simply and objectively descriptive of these events, but deal in

the most tender and personal manner with the feelings called up in the minds of the writers by their personal share in the gladness that awaits them. A good example is in the Easter hymn of the Bohemian Brethren found in most hymn-books :

Christ the Lord is risen again !
Christ has broken every chain !

Luther's hymn on the Resurrection, while based upon both Latin and German hymns on Easter, has an originality of its own. How he combines the doctrine of the Resurrection with that of Christ's sacrifice for sin, may be seen from the following verse :

The rightful Paschal Lamb is He,
On whom alone we all must live,
Who to death upon the tree,
Himself in wondrous love did give.
Faith strikes His blood upon the door,
Death sees, and dares not harm us more :
Hallelujah !

The joy of the believer's share in Christ's Resurrection is well expressed in a hymn by Heermann :

If Jesus lives, can I be sad ?
I know He loves me, and am glad ;
Though all the world were dead to me,
Enough, O Christ, if I have Thee !
Hallelujah.

One final illustration may be taken from a hymn by Spitta :

See ! thy Lord Himself is risen,
That thou mightest also rise,
And emerge from sin's dark prison
To new life and open skies.
Come to Him who can unbind thee,
And reverse thy awful doom ;
Come to Him, and leave behind thee
Thy old life—an empty tomb !

One or two examples of the manner in which these writers deal with the joys of heaven may fittingly close this chapter. The first is taken from a hymn by Spener, who was called to be senior preacher first at Dresden and later at Berlin :

It lacketh now a few short hours,
And I am in eternity ;
The wreath of fadeless heavenly flowers
Is twined already there for me,
The crown is waiting for me there,
Until the fight is wholly fought,
And all my soul is thither caught,
Where shining palms the conquerors bear.

The second is taken from a hymn on heaven by Simon Dach, the Professor of Poetry at Königsberg :

Ah ! in that fair place
Shall I not drink deep of joy,
When I see Thy face,
When I meet Thy loving eye,

When, like angels bright,
I am clothed in light!

O ye halls of Heaven,
Where the holy have their home!
Be the signal given,
End my griefs and bid me come;
All I long for is
Soon to see thy bliss.

The last example is from Gellert, Professor of Philosophy at Leipzig:

Amid the holy angels placed,
Like them in holy, happy mood,
Shall I the unmixed pleasure taste
Of godly converse with the good,
When each the other's rapture shares,
Their joy is mine, my gladness theirs.

Perchance—ah, would that this might be!—
Will some blest soul in that abode
Cry, Hail! for thou hast rescued me
And won my heart to heaven and God!
O God, what exquisite delight
To save a soul from sin and night!

CHAPTER VI

THE NEW SEED IN OTHER SOILS

The form that the Reformation took in other lands than Germany was, as is well known, of a more strict and severe type than that fostered by Luther and his friends. The Reformers in Switzerland, France, and Scotland—and we must remember that Geneva was the dominant influence in all these countries—carried their principle of the supremacy of the Bible to such an extent as to look with disfavour upon any material of praise not derived directly from its pages. Calvin himself held the view that there was nothing better for singing in public worship than the Psalms of David, which he believed to be directly dictated to the poet by the Divine Spirit. During his residence in Strassburg he published eighteen Psalms which had been translated for him probably by Clement Marot himself, though their form is somewhat different from the fuller Psalter published later under Marot's name.[1]

In the edition published a year after Marot's death in 1544 we find a hymn which has been attributed by many authorities to Calvin himself. In any case it is interesting as showing a certain amount of freedom by its inclusion in the book, and if it is from the Reformer's own pen it reveals him

[1] On the difference between Luther and Calvin see some excellent remarks in Kinloch, *An Historical Account of the Church Hymnary*, pp. 21–27.

in a rather gentler and more humanistic vein. In addition to its adoration of the Redeemer we can see the note of anxiety and suffering under persecution. The following verses will suffice to show its character :

Thou art the true and perfect gentleness,
No harshness hast Thou, and no bitterness ;
  Make us to taste and prove,
  Make us adore and love
The sweet grace found in Thee
  With longing to abide
  Ever at Thy dear side,
In Thy sweet unity.

Our hope is in no other save in Thee,
Our faith is built upon Thy promise free ;
  Come, and our hope increase,
  Comfort and give us peace,
Make us so strong and sure,
  That we shall conquerors be,
  And well and patiently
Shall every ill endure.

. . . . .

Oh, pitiful and gracious as Thou art,
The lovely Bridegroom of the holy heart,
  Lord Jesus Christ, meet Thou
  The Antichrist our foe,
In all his cruel ruth !
  Thy spirit give, that we
  May, in true verity,
Follow Thy word of truth.

The work left incomplete by Marot was finally finished by Beza in 1562, and this book became famous all over France and Switzerland and was translated into many of the languages of Europe. For a time it was the favourite song-book of the Court, and one of the French kings was in the habit of using one of Beza's Psalms as a hunting song. The people sang them in the streets, and the Court ladies made them their favourite melodies, so that Marot's own wish, expressed in the original preface, was fulfilled, when he desired "that love songs should give place to Psalms, for the time would speedily come that the labourer at his plough, the carter on the road, and the workman at his bench should solace his toil with a Psalm."

But the Psalms had sterner uses, for they were often raised on the battlefield, and martyrs chanted them among the flames at the stake. There is obviously not much to be said about the doctrinal significance of these Psalms, for they were an exact reproduction of the Hebrew piety of the Old Testament, and we shall later have an opportunity of estimating the significance of confining the praises of the Church to the Psalm-book, when we have carried farther the story of their continued employment.

A somewhat similar effort was made in England by Miles Coverdale, the translator of the Bible. His *Goostly Psalmes and Spiritualle Songes* was published in 1546 and contains paraphrases of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the *Magnificat*, two or three Latin hymns, several German hymns, and fifteen psalms. It is thus clear that Germany and not Switzerland

affected this Reformer most deeply, but there is a passage in the preface to his book which reads extremely like the one quoted above from Marot. He writes, " Would God our carters and ploughmen had none other thing to whistle upon save Psalms, and if women spinning at the wheels had none other songs, they should be better occupied than with *hey nony nony, hey troly loly*."

Somewhere about 1660 there was published in Scotland a most interesting book on the lines of Coverdale's, and containing a certain amount of the same material. This was reprinted on various occasions, and the full title occurs as follows in the Edinburgh edition of 1621: *Ane Compendious Booke, of Godly and Spirituall Songs. Collectit out of sundrie partes of the Scripture with sundrie of other Ballates changed out of prophaine sanges, for avoyding of sinne and harlotrie, with augmentation of sundrie gude and godly Ballates, not contained in the first Edition.* The book is extraordinarily interesting for many reasons. It contains a certain number of translations from Latin and German, a number of versions of Psalms, and a metrical catechism. The items of most interest, however, are the original hymns or ballads, many of them frankly and obviously based on existing secular songs, a sincere attempt to carry out Coverdale's purpose to exchange the frivolous songs of the ladies for more virtuous compositions and yet, in preserving their form, to render that change more easy and acceptable. Here, for example, are two verses from a hymn of confession that reminds us of similar passages in German hymns:

O God ! I me confes
Ane sinfull creature,
Full of all wretchitnes,
Fragill, vaine, vyle and pure.
Thair is na gude in me
Bot pryde, lust, and desyre,
And warldis vanitie,
The way to hellis fyre.

. . . .

O cast me not away
For my grit sinne, O Lord,
I grant my vices all
Blasphemit hes thy word.
God, for thy grit mercie,
And Christis wound is wyde,
Ane steidfast faith grant me
Allone to be my gyde.

Only a few examples of the most interesting of these transformed songs can be given, but one has enough originality and also religious interest to recommend it. The first verse of the early English song on which it is based runs as follows :

Grevus ys my sorowe,
Both evyne and moro !
Unto my selfe alone
Thus do I make my mowne :
That unkyndnes hath kylled me,
And put me to this peyne;
Alas ! what remedy ?
That I can not refreyne.

The religious paraphrase of this runs thus :

Grevous is my sorrow,
Baith euin and morrow ;
Unto my self allone,
Thus Christ makis his mone :
Saying, Unkyndnes hes killit me,
And put me to this paine :
Allace, quhat remedie,
For I wald nocht refraine.

The poem goes on as a monologue of Christ describing His own life and passion, and all through there is a tender and poignant pleading, as the following verse will show :

Gif ony ane be heir,
That will buy lufe sa deir,
Nocht with siluer nor gold,
Bot with my blude, beholde
Thy unkyndnes, man, has slaine me,
And put me to this paine :
Behald this pieteous body
Thus moste unkyndlie slaine.

A quaint verse follows almost immediately, and it is interesting to see how the writer includes Judas in the Lord's prayer for mercy, a much wider theological outlook than many of his countrymen have, even to-day :

Father, forgive Cayphas,
Pylate, Anna, and Judas ;
Pardone all Jurie
That cryit *Crucifige :*

Thocht unkyndelie thay slew me,
And put me to this paine :
Zit thair was na remedie,
For I will nocht refraine.

The verse with which the hymn closes is especially touching and beautiful, and reveals a conception of Christ's redemptive love far ahead of the writer's period :

O Father Imperiall,
I pray thé in speciall,
My deith mannis saull forgive,
In hevin with me to live :
Thocht unkyndely scho killit me,
I wald scho had na paine ;
For I had rather die
For hir saik anis againe.

Another of these obviously transformed hymns begins in modern spelling thus :

Who is at My window ? who, who ?
Go from My window, go, go !
Who calls there so like a stranger ?
Go from My window, go !

This verse, so obviously adapted from a song, is taken as the address of the Lord to the sinner. Then begins a long hymn in which the sinner pleads for his pardon and admission, and alternate verses carry on the dialogue with the Redeemer. Two verses must suffice as a sample of the whole, and we give them in modern spelling :

Lord, I pray Thee with all my heart,
Of Thy great mercy remove my smart,
Let one drop of Thy grace be my part,
That in at Thy door I may go.

I have spoken in My Scripture,
I will the death of no creature ;
Who will ask mercy shall be sure
And in at My door for to go.

As in the hymn quoted above, the Lord is made to say in one passage that He would go through all the sufferings of the Passion again, or even endure worse agony, in order that the penitent might enter in through the door of mercy. The hymn closes quite dramatically with a variant of the opening verse :

Who is at My window ? who ?
Go from My window, go !
Cry no more there like a stranger,
But in at My door thou go.

Another is founded on the old English song quoted in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, "John, come kiss me now." The beginning is very quaint in the form found in the *Ballates* :

Johne, cum kis me now,
Johne, cum kis me now ;
Johne, cum kis me by and by
And mak no moir adow.

The Lord thy God I am
That Johne dois thé call;
Johne representit man,
Be grace celestiall.

The verses then proceed to expound, as from God Himself, the doctrine of salvation. A few lines taken from different sections of the poem will show how this is done:

God become man for thé,
For thy sin his lyfe did spend.
Thy attonement and peace to mak,
He sched his blude maist halie,
Suffering deith for thy saik,
Quhat culd he do moir for thé?

. . . . .

Of my mercy and speciall grace,
I send thé my Gospell.
My Prophetis call, my preicheouris cry,
Johne, cum kis me now,
Johne, cum kis me by and by,
And mak no moir adow.
Ane Spreit I am incorporate,
Na mortall eye can me se,
Zit my word dois intimate,
Johne, how thow must kis me.

Many of the *Ballates* deal with the persecution at the hands of the Reformer's enemies, and also with the evils of the Papacy and the abuses and wickedness prevalent in monasteries and nunneries. Some

of these verses are too coarse for quotation here, but a few examples must be given to show the sincerity and rough humour of the adaptations, and particularly because they serve as the most readily accessible examples of a type of verse that was found also in certain German and French books. Here is one derived from a song said to have been written by William Gray, and to have been a favourite with Henry VIII, but a similar hymn was current in Scotland at an earlier period :

With huntis up, with huntis up,
It is now perfite day,
Jesus, our King, is gane in hunting,
Quha lykis to speid thay may.

Ane cursit fox lay hid in rox
This lang and mony ane day,
Devouring scheip, quhill he micht creip,
Nane micht him schaip away.

. . . . .

The hunter is Christ, that huntis in haist,
The hundis ar Peter and Paull,
The Paip is the foxe, Rome is the rox,
That rubbis us on the gall.

Here are two verses from another poem that deal with the persecution :

Heretykis thay did us call,
Cursand us nicht and day,
The treuth durst na man say.
Trew preichouris war forbiddin all
To schaw the word of Jesus Christ.

Thay baneist thame in uncouth land,
Full mony hunder myle ;
Quhair they in thair exile,
Leirnit better till understand
The trew word of Jesus Christ.

That Luther's doctrine of the Christian right of marriage for the clergy was joyfully accepted by the writers of the *Ballates* the first verse of another of them will show :

God send everie Preist ane wyfe,
And everie Nunne ane man,
That thay micht leve that haly lyfe,
As first the Kirk began.

The *Ballates* deal with many aspects of the Roman doctrine. In one instance there is an assertion that not a spark of the fire of purgatory is left. In another the writer says :

I wat Sanct Peter, nor Sanct Paule,
Nor zit na Sanct can saif your saule.

Again, Masses for the dead are thus condemned :

Requiem Eternam fast thay patter
Befoir the deid, with haly watter ;
The lawit folkis[1] trowis the hevin will clatter,
Thay sing with sic devotioun.

Another deals with the lives of the priests and bids them amend their ways. They are bidden not

[1] i.e. lay people.

to pray to St. Anthony to save their sow, or to St. Bryde to keep their cow, for such prayers "grieve God right sorely." They are bidden not to sell the Mass, but to minister the Sacrament as Christ commanded in the New Testament. They are also bidden to sing English Psalms in their mother-tongue. Another poem deals very severely with the Pope and all his clergy. It is also interesting because each verse has an obviously secular refrain. The first verse in modern setting reads as follows :

The Pope, that pagan full of pride,
He has us blinded long ;
For where the blind the blind does guide,
No wonder they go wrong :
Like Prince and King he led the ring
Of all iniquity ;
Hay, trix, tryme go trix,
Under the greenwood tree.

The least severe of the indictments this poem contains may be gathered from the following couplets modernized :

The silly friars, many years
With babbling bleared our eyes.
. . . . .
The curate his creed he could not read,
Shame fall the company.
. . . . .
The monks of Melrose made good broth
On Fridays when they fasted.

Another of these poems is directed against the Mass. One verse will suffice in a modern paraphrase :

If God be trans-substantial
In bread with *hoc est corpus meum*,
Why were you so unnatural
As take Him in your teeth and slay Him ?
For thus you have divided Him
At your dumb show,
But God knows how you guided Him
Your Mass you mumble so.

One very interesting poem is filled with examples from classical story, and from mythology, against the sin of unchastity, while a companion poem takes all its examples from Holy Writ. Both of these are based on a secular song, which was an entreaty of a lover to his lady. We may quote the last verse of the second of these poems, with the explanation that the previous verse has spoken of Joseph as an example of chastity. Again the language has been modernized :

Of him let us example take,
And never think on Cupid's dart :
Venus can neither mar nor make,
If unto God we join our heart :
And leave this way of longing lust,
Alas ! Alas !
And in the Lord have hope and trust
Who is and was.

For nearly two hundred years after the appearance of this book there was no attempt in Scotland to provide any material for the service of praise in public worship other than the metrical version of the Psalms. Into the intricate and interesting history of that version, both in England and in Scotland, it is not part of the purpose of this book to enter. Suffice it to say that though we may admire to the full the strength and dignity that Psalm-singing imparted to the piety of Scotland, it is a matter of deep regret that for so long a period no material drawn from the New Testament was included in the worship of the Scottish Churches. It was inevitable that the reflex influence of centring all their thought on the religious expressions of the devotion of Judaism must have narrowed and hardened the minds of the worshippers.

As time went on the associations of these Psalms increased their sanctity in the minds of the worshippers. Their use by Covenanters on the moors, and martyrs at the stake, naturally rendered them more precious to succeeding generations, and we can well understand the plea for their retention, unaltered, made by Sir Walter Scott, when he wrote: "They are the very words and accents of our early Reformers, sung by them in woe and gratitude in the fields, in the churches, and on the scaffold. The parting with this very association of ideas is a serious loss to the cause of devotion, and scarce to be incurred without the certainty of corresponding advantages."

Yet while admitting the truth of such sentiments, it remains nevertheless true that much in the Psalter

is distinctly out of place in a Christian liturgy. Such Psalms as the eighty-third and the one hundred and ninth have no right to a place in the worship of Him who taught us that God is Love, and that the supreme duty of humanity is the forgiveness of trespasses and love to one's neighbour.[1]

It was not till 1745 that the Scottish Church gave its blessing to a collection of forty-five paraphrases of passages of Scripture, written by such hymn-writers as Watts, Doddridge and Tate. Even though this collection had the approval of the Church, it never received its formal sanction.

The Relief Church seems to have been the first to issue a hymn-book, which was published in 1794, though a collection of hymns by a Baptist minister, Sir William Sinclair, was issued in 1751 for the use of his own congregation at Keiss in Caithness.

In England, from the days of Queen Elizabeth, the practice of singing metrical Psalms in the churches had been not only permitted but encouraged, the only condition being laid down by the Queen's injunction that " the sentence of the hymn may be understood and perceived." Very many eminent poets were included among those who prepared versions of the Psalms, for example, Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Donne, George Herbert, Crashaw, and Milton.

The new version by Tate and Brady was not finally published till 1696, and it was only when Isaac Watts, in the beginning of the eighteenth

[1] See the treatment of this topic by Dr. Peter Haworth in *English Hymns and Ballads*, pp. 19, 20, and by Dr. F. Ballard in *The Hibbert Journal*, October 1927, p. 155.

century, published his *Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament*, that a real effort was made to adapt the Psalter to the purposes of Christian worship. He omitted certain Psalms, as he saw they were not suitable to the New Covenant, and many times he paraphrased rather than translated. His evangelical interpretation of the Psalms was a distinct forward step. Here is an example of his version of the forty-seventh Psalm :

Jesus, our Lord, ascends on high ;
His heavenly guards around
Attend Him rising through the sky,
With trumpets' joyful sound.

The last verse of the same Psalm is an example of one of his frequent infelicities in adaptation :

The British Islands are the Lord's,
There Abraham's God is known.
While powers and princes, shields and swords,
Submit before His throne.

Another example is found in his version of the sixty-fifth Psalm :

Against my will my sins prevail,
Thy grace shall purge away their stain ;
The blood of Christ will never fail
To wash my garments white again.

In his preface Watts tells us that, " Where the psalmist describes religion by the fear of God I

have often joined faith and love to it. Where he speaks of the pardon of sin through the mercies of God, I have added the merits of a Saviour. Where he talks of sacrificing goats or bullocks, I rather choose to mention the Sacrifice of Christ the Lamb of God. When he attends the Ark with shouting into Zion, I sing the ascension of my Saviour into Heaven, or His presence in His Church on Earth. Where he promises abundance of wealth, honour, and long life, I have changed some of these typical blessings for grace, glory, and life eternal, which are brought to light by the gospel, and promised in the New Testament; and I am fully satisfied that more honour is done to our Blessed Saviour by speaking His Name, His graces, and actions, in His own language, according to the brighter discoveries He hath now made, than by going back again to the Jewish forms of worship, and the language of types and figures." Let us see how in a few passages he fulfils his claim. Thus from the fifty-first Psalm :

> No bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,
> Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
> Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
> Can wash the dismal stain away.
>
> Jesus, my God, Thy blood alone
> Hath power sufficient to atone ;
> Thy blood can make me white as snow
> No Jewish types could cleanse me so.

From Psalm cxxxii, that describes the entrance of the ark into its resting-place :

Arise, O King of Grace, arise,
And enter to Thy rest!
Lo! Thy Church waits with longing eyes
Thus to be owned and blest.

Let us see how he deals with the closing verses of the seventeenth Psalm. The well-known words:

"As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness,"

appear as:

I shall behold the face
Of my forgiving God;
And stand complete in righteousness,
Wash'd in my Saviour's blood.

There's a new heaven begun,
When I awake from death,
Dress'd in the likeness of Thy Son,
And draw immortal breath.

The sixth verse of the ninety-seventh Psalm, namely:

"The heavens declare His righteousness,
And all the peoples have seen His glory,"

becomes a hymn on the Incarnation, thus:

The Lord is come; the heavens proclaim
His birth; the nations learn His name;
An unknown star directs the road
Of eastern sages to their God.

All ye bright armies of the skies,
Go worship where the Saviour lies ;
Angels and kings before Him bow,
Those gods on high and gods below.

As a final illustration of his method we shall take the two concluding verses of his paraphrase of the one hundred and forty-seventh Psalm, verses 18–20, in order to show how he applies the Psalmist's words to Great Britain :

He bids the southern breezes blow ;
The ice dissolves, the waters flow :
But he hath nobler works and ways
To call the Britons to his praise.

To all the isle his laws are shown,
His gospel through the nation known ;
He hath not thus reveal'd his word
To every land : praise ye the Lord.

It would not be fair to Watts' reputation to leave upon the reader's mind the impression that such passages as we have cited are the best examples of his versions of the Psalms. They have been chosen solely to illustrate the new method he applied to the interpretation of the Hebrew Psalter. Such magnificent paraphrases as those he wrote of the ninetieth Psalm :

Our God, our help, in ages past ;

of the one hundred and thirty-sixth :

Give to our God immortal praise,

or of the seventy-second, which constitutes one of the best examples of his adaptation of a Hebrew poem to Christian purposes :

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun,

will always retain their place in the public worship of English-speaking peoples as among the finest of their hymns of praise. Of the further endeavours of Watts to improve Church praise we shall deal in the next chapter.

We may probably trace the origin of such adaptations of the Hebrew Psalter to the address of Peter in *Acts*,[1] and especially to the verses which assert that the Psalmist spoke of Christ's Resurrection. If necessity were felt for any grounds of authority this would justify the practice in the minds of these hymn writers.

[1] See Acts ii. 25–36.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY ENGLISH HYMNS

When we come to deal with the great body of hymns written in our own language we have to distinguish between the individual productions of many writers as religious poetry, and the use of hymns in public worship; and in the case of England, this distinction is more marked and lasted over a longer period than in the countries we have already mentioned. So long as the Roman Church was the dominant type of religious service in Great Britain, the Latin hymns were naturally the only ones to be employed; and, as we have already seen, when the English language became the medium of worship in the days of Henry VIII, the only metrical hymn found in the vernacular was the translation of the *Veni Creator Spiritus*:

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,

which remains in the Prayer-Book service for the Ordering of Priests to this day.

We know that much earlier than this period many beautiful hymns existed in English, and metrical devotions of various sorts were contained in such works as *The Lay Folks' Mass Book*; but these were probably designed for private devotion during Mass, and for the general help of the religious life of the laity. In Queen Elizabeth's Primer (one of the

names given to the layman's books of devotion) there were renderings of certain Latin hymns, and in 1627 a book founded upon this earlier work was issued by Bishop Cousin entitled *A Collection of Private Devotions*. In this a larger number of translations appear. When the effect of the Reformation began to be felt in England it was not the more liberal thought and practice of Luther that won the day, but the narrower conception of Church Praise advocated by Calvin, so that versions of the Psalms became the sole vehicle of praise in the English Church. Sometimes paraphrases of other passages of Scripture were included, but these frequently led to abuses and absurdities, so that the Church frowned upon such efforts, and it was not until the close of the seventeenth century that hymn-singing was approved in general public worship. This is not to say that there were no hymn writers in the England of that period. In fact the reverse is true, for many famous poets, such as Donne, Herbert, Fletcher, Wither, and even Spenser and Milton must be included in the list of English hymn writers. But their work had to wait a long time for public recognition and use in the worship of the Church as a whole.

The most handy form in which to find the leading hymns that were written in the reign of Elizabeth is in the volume edited for the Parker Society by Edward Farr, and entitled *Select Poetry*. The earliest writer in the book is William Hunnis, a gentleman of the Chapel Royal under Edward VI. Among the poems from his pen, contained in the volume, are three short hymns addressed to

Jesus, quite simple and tender in thought and expression, as two verses selected from them will show :

O Jesu sweet, grant that Thy grace
Always so work in me,
I may desire the thing to do
Most pleasing unto Thee.

. . . . .

O Jesu, quicken Thou my soul,
That it may cleave to Thee,
And for Thy painful passion's sake
Have mercy now on me.

Another of his hymns, entitled *A Humble Suit of a Repentant Sinner for Mercy*, was, with five others, attached to Sternhold and Hopkins's *Psalter* which was published in 1560–2, and so these formed an exception to the general rule that hymns were not used at so early a period in public worship. Four lines from this hymn will show its character :

My soul desires to drink
From fountain of Thy grace ;
To slake this thirst, O God, vouchsafe,
And turn not off Thy face.

Another from his pen is a quaint little dialogue between Christ and a sinner, the close of which runs as follows :

Sinner

O Lord, Thy grace must this performe,
Or else it cannot be.

Christ

My grace you have, the same applie,
And blessed shall you be.

Sinner

Through this sweet grace Thy mercie, Lord,
We humblie doo require.

Christ

By mercie Mine I you forgive,
And grant this your desire.

Two of his hymns are based on Psalms vi. and li., but they cannot in any sense be called paraphrases, as they only contain three verses of each psalm, upon which the remaining verses are in a manner meditations. The quaint close of the first of these will suffice to indicate their manner, and also to show the use he makes of Scripture :

As did the man three loaves of bread
Unto his neighbour lend,
Whose knocking long forced him to rise,
And show himself a friend,

Lord, by the mouth of Thy dear Son
This promise didst Thou make,
That if we knock, Thou open wilt
The door even for His sake.

Wherefore we cry, we knock, we call,
And never cease will we,

Till Thou do turn to us, O Lord,
That we may turn to Thee.

Another of the six hymns contained in the Psalter is from the pen of Humphrey Gifford, and is entitled *The Complaint of a Sinner*. It is not a great hymn, but has a certain pathos and simple power about it, and was certainly too severely treated by one of its critics in the seventeenth century who termed it "nonsensical."

Four lines will suffice for quotation :

I wake, yet am asleep ;
I see, yet still am blind ;
In ill I run with headlong race ;
In good I come behind.

Amongst the most interesting hymns in the book are those by Sir Nicholas Breton, though they are probably rather too fanciful for congregational use, and are so long and the verses linked together so closely in meaning that it is difficult to select one or two by way of illustration. One verse is all for which we can find room :

Christ loved to death, yet love did never die ;
For love by death did work the death of death !
O living love ! O heavenly mystery !
Too great a glory for this world beneath,
The blessed breathing of the highest breath.
Blest are they born that only find in Thee,
O blessed God, what blessed love may be.

There is a good Whit-Sunday hymn by Francis Kinwelmersh beginning :

Come Holy Ghost, Eternal God,
And ease the woeful grief,
That through the heaps of heavy sin
Can nowhere find relief.

A long hymn by Samuel Rowlands, entitled *The Highway to Mt. Calvary*, possesses much quaint power and pathos. We quote one verse from about the middle of the hymn, and also the closing verse with its sharp, if somewhat rough, contrast :

Follow His feet that goes
For to redeem Thy loss,
And carries all our sins with Him
To cancel on His Cross.

. . . . .

By Adam Paradise
Was sin's polluted shade :
By Christ the dunghill Golgotha
A Paradise was made.

A touching little hymn is one from the pen of Timothy Kendall, a member of Staple Inn ; its simplicity of word and thought commend it. The first and last verses are here given :

If ever Thou me love,
I joyful am for aye :
If ever me Thou leave,
My soul doth sorrow slay.

. . . .

Wherefore, O loving Lord,
Love still to make me live ;
So shall I never leave
Thee laud and praise to give.

There is a long anonymous hymn on the heavenly Jerusalem, which has many original features, and is well worth study.[1] One verse shows how the author wisely conceives the real joy of heaven :

Reward as virtue different is ;
Distinct their joys and happiness ;
But each in joy of other's bliss
Doth as his own the same possess.

Sometimes the effort of these hymn writers gets beyond our understanding. It is difficult to see how Abraham Fleming, the author of the following verse, considered his feat might be accomplished :

My heart, my tongue and voice
Shall play the organ pipes
In praysing Him, out of the score
Our desperate debts which wipes.

Many of these writers, after the manner of the time, become far too fantastical in their ingenuity and frequently offensively so. We shall give but one verse from the poems by John Davis, as a moderate example, bidding our readers believe they will find, if they search, many worse and many better of a similar kind :

[1] Op. cit., pp. 427–432.

Mine onely schoole shall be mount Calverie ;
The pulpit but the crosse ; and teacher none,
But the mere crucifixe to mortifie ;
No letters but Thy blessed wounds alone :
No commaes but Thy stripes ; no periods
But Thy nailes, crowne of thornes, speare, whips,
and rods.

A number of the hymns deal in polemical fashion with Romanism, and like the Lutheran hymns of a similar cast, class the Turk and the Pope together as Christ's arch-enemies, as in the following verse :

Confound the rage of rebels stout ;
Lord, be our strength and tower :
As from the Turk, so shield us, Lord,
From force of Popish power.

The poem just quoted classes Cain, Arius, Judas, Mahomet and the Emperor Julian together as equal sinners. The verse concerning Arius may be given :

If Arius, that heretic,
Enjoy felicity ;
Then shall your Pope, and you his saints,
Which are as ill as he.

The writer is, however, quite sure of his ground and knows this will not be the case, for he continues :

But hark ! prepare your ears to hear
What tidings I shall tell :
As these for their most wicked lives
Didst sink down into hell ;

So shall the Pope and all his saints,
Unless they do repent,
Receive like hire, when Christ from heaven
To judge us shall be sent.

A long poem in dialogue form by J. Rhodes is a controversy between Protestant and Papist. The following two stanzas are interesting as giving contemporary evidence of the sects that were then (1602) prominent. The Papist begins by raising the question of the variety of sects :

Many and sundry sects appear
Now in the world, both far and near ;
The Protestant, the Puritan,
The Calvinist, and Zwinglian,
The Brownist, and the Family of Love,
And many more that I can prove ;
Beside the Roman faith truly,
Which Protestants call Papistry.
All these are Christ's true Church, they say ;
But now on which shall my soul stay ?

To which statement the Protestant replies as follows :

Strange sects there are, and so will be,
The Church to try in each degree :
But for the most of them you name
They are not worthy of that blame.
The Brownist, he is punished ;
The Familists from us are fled :
If we were rid of Papists too,
Both kingdoms should have less to do.

The discussion goes on at great length, and on the whole one must admit that the Papist is the more gentlemanly in his speech, and that the Protestant is too apt to rely on harsh accusations rather than argument. Lines like the following are much too frequent :

Like dogs and foxes therefore you
Did lead your lives : it is your due :
Like swine, like wolves, like Satan's brood,
That never did God's people good.
Like hypocrites in every place
You lived, and do, without God's grace :
You make poor people to believe
That you can all their sins forgive.
It were too long to make relation,
How you and yours deserve damnation.

Three contemporary poets contributed to the wealth of English hymns. The first was Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, whose life was written by Isaac Walton, who refers to Donne's most famous hymn as being often sung by the choristers in St. Paul's, and that Donne said of it that it restored to him the same " thoughts of joy that possessed his soul in sickness when he composed it."

The hymn is probably known to many readers, but the beauty of its expression and the unexpected pathos of its closing line in the first two verses, and exultant joy in the last verse, give it a unique character. Its construction will be clearly manifest from the second and third verses :

Wilt Thou forgive that sin, which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door ?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two ;—but wallowed in a score ?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore ;
But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine as He shines now, and heretofore ;
And having done that, Thou hast done,
I fear no more.

The most familiar of the three writers is George Herbert, and nothing is finer in its own way in the English language than his book of verses entitled *The Temple*. Isaac Walton tells us how fond Herbert was of singing to his lute or viol his own hymns, but unfortunately very few of them ever found their way into the service of public worship. Such hymns as " King of Glory, King of Peace," " Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life," " My Joy, My Life, My Crown," " Throw Away Thy Rod," " Teach Me, My God and King," " Love Bade me Welcome," and " Let all the World in every Corner Sing," should be in constant use in Church praise. Herbert brought a new note into the conception of a hymn, and the famous verse in the *Elixir* :

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine,

shows how far ahead he was of his generation, and how he anticipated the modern emphasis upon humble and everyday service. It is impossible to do more here than quote one of the lesser-known short poems, that written for Trinity Sunday :

> Lord, who hast form'd me out of mud,
> And hast redeem'd me through Thy blood,
> And sanctifi'd me to do good ;
>
> Purge all my sinnes done heretofore :
> For I confesse my heavie score,
> And I will strive to sinne no more.
>
> Enrich my heart, mouth, hands in me,
> With faith, with hope, with charitie ;
> That I may runne, rise, rest with Thee.

Herbert's friend, Nicholas Ferrar, wrote and used in his community at Little Gidding—of which there is such a beautiful description in *John Inglesant*—a number of hymns.

The third of the poets was George Wither, whose *Hymns and Songs of the Church* was published in 1623, and his *Hallelujah, Britain's Second Remembrancer*, in 1641. The first book consists largely of paraphrases of parts of Scripture, of the Ten Commandments, The Lord's Prayer and Creed, and even of the Creed of Athanasius, which, by the way, it is well to remind ourselves, was rather a hymn than a creed in its original form. The reader might like to see one verse of this unique paraphrase, to notice with what skill the poet gets over his great difficulties :

The Father likewise God and Lord ;
And God and Lord the Son ;
And God and Lord the Holy Ghost,
Yet God and Lord but One.
For though each Person by Himself
We God and Lord confess,
Yet Christian faith forbids that we
Three Gods or Lords profess.

The remainder of the book contains original hymns for the various festivals and feast-days of the Church. We can only take one quaint example, a verse from his Hymn for St. George's Day. In the preface to this hymn he says, "Jesus Christ is the true St. George, and our English tutelary saint ; even he that cometh armed upon the White Horse, Rev. xix, 11, . . . nor is there any irreverence in imposing this name on our Redeemer ; for George signifieth an husbandman, which is a name or attribute, that even Christ applied to His Father, John xv, 2." The second verse of the hymn works out the idea thus :

Thou art, Oh Christ, that valiant Knight,
Whose order we profess,
And that Saint George, who oft doth fight
For England in distress :
The Dragon thou o'erthrew'st is he,
That would Thy Church devour,
And that fair Lady (Lord) is she,
Thou savest from his power.

With Wither's *Hallelujah* we come to one of the most interesting books of original hymns in the

English language. In his preface the author says that " by song, matters of moment may not only be committed to memory with more ease, but be more delightfully preserved unforgotten than by any other means." He classes himself with Quarles, George Herbert and others in the attempt to turn poetry to the service of religion. He has endeavoured to use plain language, and to adapt his poems to simple tunes. His wish is to advance Christian rejoicing, and the fault will not be his, he remarks, " if there follow not a merry time." The opening hymn of the volume :

Come, O come in pious lays,

has found its way into several modern hymn-books, but should be much more widely known than it is at present. The scheme of his book is to provide hymns for all sorts of occasions in everyday life, and therefore many of them are not fitted for public worship, but much more use might have been made of them than the editors of hymn-books have hitherto done. The book is a lasting joy to all who know it, and its occasional quaintnesses only add to its charm. We may take, as a specimen of many others, the following short hymn entitled *Before We Begin Our Work :*

Since Thou hast, Lord ! appointed so,
That man by labour must be fed ;
Lo with a cheerful mind I go
To labour for my daily bread.

I do not at my lot repine,
Though others live much more at ease ;
But I subject my will to Thine,
And Thy good pleasure me shall please.

Let what I purpose now to do
Be fully pleasing unto Thee ;
And give a good success thereto,
That profit thence may spring to me.
Be Thou the author of each deed
Which now by me shall be begun ;
With me throughout my works proceed,
And perfect them when I have done.

In a hymn written to accompany the process of undressing, we may notice a good example of the manner in which he gives a symbolic meaning to ordinary actions, without being too fantastical :

My fruitless hopes, my foolish fears,
My lust, my lofty pride ;
My fleshly joys, my needless cares,
Must quite be laid aside.
Yea, that self-love which yet I wear
More near me than my skin,
Must off be pluck'd ere I shall dare
My last long sleep begin.

Another charming example is from his hymn for inn-keepers, the last verse of which runs as follows :

So at mine inn Thy blessed Son
His lodging, Lord ! shall take ;
And there, much more than I have done,
Him welcome I will make :

For not a stable but my breast
Shall be His lodging room ;
And mine own heart to give Him rest,
A pallet shall become.

We should hardly expect to discover much of doctrinal significance in this book, but when we do come across hymns which include doctrinal statements we are struck by their sanity and lack of extravagance when compared with other hymns of the same period. His second hymn on the Sacrament, for example, treats of the subject in a simple and practical fashion ; and, while it touches on controversial topics, always relegates these to a second place compared with the spiritual significance of the service. It would require the whole hymn to make this clear, but the following two verses may convey some idea of what we mean :

In this no gross realities
We casually conceive,
Or that their proper qualities
The bread or wine do leave.
But in this Holy Eucharist,
By faith and grace divine,
We know we feed on Thee, O Christ !
Receiving bread and wine.

. . . . .

Let us, therefore, our faith erect
On what Thy Word doth say,
And hold their knowledge in suspect
Who new foundations lay.

For thereby some a cursed rent
Within Thy Church have left ;
And by Thy peaceful Sacrament,
The world of peace bereft.

We may take leave of Wither's book, though all unwillingly, with a verse from his concluding hymn for himself :

Let no passed sin or folly,
Nor a future fault in me,
Make unfruitful or unholy
What I offer now to Thee ;
But with favour and compassion,
Cure and cover each transgression.

With Henry Vaughan we touch one of the finest spirits in English sacred mystical poetry, though very little of his verse has been found suitable for public worship. One feels that more might be adapted from his pages, but anyhow he cannot be passed by even in this rapid review, for his thought influenced other hymn-writers of a later period. Take, for instance, the following lines from the close of his poem *The Nativity*. How much finer they are than many much longer hymns on the same subject, and how perfectly they avoid the semi-pagan atmosphere of a hymn like Heber's much-belauded *Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning*.

Here are Vaughan's lines :

But stay : what light is that doth stream
And drop here in a gilded beam ?

It is Thy star runs page, and brings
Thy tributary Eastern kings.
Lord ! grant some light to us, that we
May with them find the way to Thee !
Behold what mists eclipse the day !
How dark it is ! Shed down one ray,
To guide us out of this dark night,
And say once more, " Let there be light ! "

Again, in the verses entitled *The True Christmas* the closing lines run :

Dress finely what comes not in sight
And then you keep your Christmas right.

There are some other lovely lines which make a correct use of the term abused in a much better-known hymn :

Thou Rock of Ages ! and the Rest
Of all, that for Thee are oppressed !
Send down the Spirit of Thy truth.

Take another two verses from the poem on the Incarnation and Passion, and see with what fine tenderness of insight he deals with the Redeemer's love, without introducing any of the coarser elements that are so common in such hymns :

Ah, my dear Lord ! what could'st Thou spy
In this impure rebellious clay,
That made Thee thus resolve to die
For those that kill Thee every day ?

O what strange wonders could Thee move
To slight Thy precious blood and breath ?
Sure it was love, my Lord ! for love
Is only stronger far than death.

The exquisite lines entitled *Peace* are among the best known of his verses, and have found their way into a few hymn-books. The poem begins :

My soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars.

Our closing quotation from Vaughan must be the last lines of a lovely little hymn which reveals his sense of absolute surrender to the divine will as the only source of peace and joy :

O it is Thy only art
To reduce a stubborn heart ;
And since Thine is victory,
Strongholds should belong to Thee ;
Lord, then take it, leave it not
Unto my dispose or lot ;
But since I would not have it mine,
O my God, let it be Thine !

Of other hymn writers of this period several verses by Samuel Crossman and the two well-known hymns by Bishop Ken have passed into congregational use, but the latter hymns should be studied in their entirety and not only in the selections given in most hymn-books. We should then realize the truth of what Mr. Leigh Bennett says when he

selects, as the chief peculiarity of Ken's hymns, "the intensity of spiritual imagination which lifts them to an angel-level reached by no other English hymns."

Towards the end of the seventeenth century a little volume called *Songs of Praise* was published by the Rev. John Mason, and it marks an important era in the story of English hymns, as its contents are better suited for public worship than many of their predecessors and also because they exerted a very direct influence upon Isaac Watts and the Wesleys. The verses themselves are often rude in form, but there is a strength and directness about them that counterbalance their obvious imperfections, and the majority of them are true to their title, and really are *Praise* hymns. One of the best is an evening hymn that is to be found in several collections and begins :

> Now from the altar of my heart,
> Let incense flames arise ;

and its finest verse runs as follows :

> Minutes and mercies multiplied,
> Have made up all this day :
> Minutes came quick, but mercies were
> More fleet and free than they.

Another consists of titles of Christ, and in that way is similar to some of the hymns we have already discussed. It is rather too like a catalogue, but may be said to be in the tradition of the hymn by Clement

which was quoted on page 38. Mason's view of human nature is, of course, the common Calvinistic one of his day, and much of his thanksgiving is based on the thought of the Divine mercy in leaving him alive at all, as thus :

That miracles are ceased,
Some confidently tell ;
But I do know, it is not so
Whilst I am out of hell.

The imagery, that became so common in later hymns, of the fountain of blood springing from the wounds of Christ, is found in Mason, and the following lines will show to how quaint an image it is linked :

As *Adam* slept and from his side
A killing *Eve* arose ;
From my pierc'd Lord (that Smitten Rock)
A pure Life Fountain flows.

Ah, what a tainted wretch is Man !
And so he must have stood ;
But lo ! an Act of Sov'reign Grace
Restores him to his Blood.

Save me, my God, for I am Thine :
Lord, own Thy Seal to me :
O wash my Soul till it be cleans'd,
And purify'd for Thee.

The honour of being the first community of Christians to employ hymns regularly in worship in England belongs to the Baptists, and the name

associated with the innovation is that of Benjamin Keach, whose first book of hymns was published in 1691 ; but his object was not gained without much controversy, and for a time the Baptist denomination was split into singing and non-singing sections. Keach, in his preface to *Spiritual Melody*, the book above referred to, writes that since there are some "Godly Christians who do not think that divers Psalms do so well suit with Christians under the Gospel, as Scripture Hymns do, and divers worthy ministers of the Baptized way, though choice preachers, and fully satisfied in singing the praises of God, yet may not have judgment to compose hymns," he will meet their desires by the hymns he has composed. We can see the controversial aspect of the question, when, in a later passage of the preface, Keach expresses the hope that men will no longer speak of hymn-singing as a "carnal or formal thing," nor "cry out, 'Tis as bad as Common Prayer.'" His hymns consist mainly of expansions of Scripture metaphors, descriptive of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Many of these are very quaint, for in addition to such obvious titles of Deity as Father, Husbandman, Tower, Potter, Sun and Shield, he also writes hymns on God as a Giant, a Moth, a Travailing Woman, A Man of War, and a Lion.

One might say that the hymn on God as a Giant is almost a forecast of Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven*, as the following lines will indicate :

Then do not mourn, ye godly ones,
When on you God does run,

He pities you, and hears your moans,
In mercy will return
Again to you, and you shall see
His sweet and lovely face.

One verse from the hymn of the moth metaphor will show how he treats such a subject :

A moth doth eat things by degrees,
A little now and then,
So gradually Thou dost destroy
Sometimes vile wicked men.

It must be said that on the whole he declares a doctrine of mercy and of love more frequently than of judgment, though this note is not lacking. Indeed he has some terrible verses on hell, but it should be said in fairness to him that he states in his preface he does not think them suitable to be sung. We must content ourselves with one other curious illustration from this book, a hymn that he describes as *The Bowels of Christ Shown by a Hen*— the reference is, of course, to our Lord's elegy over Jerusalem. Part of the hymn runs as follows :

Thy bowels unto sinners, Lord,
Is showed by the hen,
Who in her care of all her young
Doth far exceed some men.

And as a hen doth chuck and call
According to her kind,
Thereby to save her chickens all
From kites, which she does find

Do often of them make a prey,
So dost Thou call and cry
To sinners whilst it is to-day,
Whom Thou dost, Lord, espy

To be in danger by their sin,
And devil's many ways ;
Nay, Thou dost call, and call again
Full oft, for many days.

In this volume and in others Keach wrote hymns for the service of Adult Baptism, and from one of these we quote two verses that prove a controversial attitude toward the opponents of this form of the Sacrament :

Those who are buried covered are
All over in the earth,
In Baptism the selfsame thing
Must plain be holden forth.

Or else it answers not the end
Of Christ, who did ordain
That glorious rite, if not so done
They do the same profane.

About the same time the Independents introduced a similar type of hymn. Those employed were not very excellent in themselves (probably those written by Mason were among the best), but they are to be regarded as important because of their initiation of a new and significant method. We have already spoken of the work done by Watts in paraphrasing the Psalms, and now we have to

deal with his purely original hymns. His purpose in the composition of many of them was to emphasize the teaching of the sermon that preceded the hymn, but this was not, of course, their only purpose. A number of them were hymns written for the Communion Service, the most famous of these being the hymn that was reckoned by Matthew Arnold the finest hymn in the English language, *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*. Even this hymn was marred by the language of the fourth verse, which is generally omitted in modern books; but it would be regarded by its author as a natural expression of the ideas he wished to convey. The verse runs as follows:

> His dying crimson, like a robe,
> Spreads o'er His body on the tree;
> Then am I dead to all the globe,
> And all the globe is dead to me.

The figure is perfectly atrocious, but no worse than many that he used. In many cases also he could descend to the most doggerel verse; but in spite of such imperfections his influence on subsequent hymn-writing was of the utmost importance. He gave a sense of unity, proportion and definiteness to a hymn, which has remained a feature of the best English hymns since his day. It is not, however, his literary form, but his ideas that concern us here, and some of these we must examine as they are expressed in his hymns. The Calvinistic doctrine of election appears in several of his hymns, but it should in justice be said that these are generally paraphrases of Scripture where the doctrine is

taught. For instance, the following verses are from a paraphrase of Romans ix. 21-24 :

> May not the sovereign Lord on high
> Dispense His favours as He will,
> Choose some to life, while others die,
> And yet be just and gracious still ?

Amongst his curious and unhappy paraphrases of the *Song of Songs* we find another example of the election doctrine which has become famous :

> We are a garden walled around,
> Chosen and made peculiar ground ;
> A little spot enclosed by grace
> Out of the world's wide wilderness.

The doctrine of Substitution is, of course, to be found in many hymns, and frequently Watts employs such a phrase as " the dying God " when he speaks of the Redeemer upon the Cross. Take the following as an example :

> But, O unutterable grace !
> The Son of God takes Adam's place ;
> Down to our world the Saviour flies,
> Stretches His arms, and bleeds, and dies.

> Justice was pleased to bruise the God,
> And pay its wrongs with heavenly blood :
> What unknown racks and pains He bore !
> Then rose ; the law could ask no more.

Even more revolting is another verse, following upon a reference to the Divine vengeance :

Rich were the drops of Jesu's blood
That calmed His frowning face,
That sprinkled o'er the burning throne,
And turned the wrath to grace.

One more example may be taken, as it is an instance of one danger that this type of theology engendered, namely, the encouragement to look to Jesus in preference to God :

Dearest of all the names above,
My Jesus and my God,
Who can resist Thy heavenly love,
Or trifle with Thy blood ?

'Tis by the merits of Thy death
The Father smiles again ;
'Tis by Thine interceding breath
The Spirit dwells with men.

Another subject that is frequently found in Watts' hymns is that of eternal punishment and the horrors of hell. One hymn, for example, begins as follows :

My thoughts on awful subjects roll,
Damnation and the dead ;
What horrors seize the guilty soul
Upon a dying bed !

The following is still more vivid, though perhaps one should state that in certain editions of the hymns the two verses are bracketed ; but that was generally done in order to shorten the hymn without spoiling the sense. Here, however, are the verses :

Eternal plagues and heavy chains,
  Tormenting racks and fiery coals,
And darts, t' inflict immortal pains,
  Dyed in the blood of damned souls.

There Satan the first sinner lies,
  And roars, and bites his iron bands;
In vain the rebel strives to rise,
  Crushed with the weight of both Thy hands.

Watts, in common with the thinkers of his day, was fond of language that depreciated human nature, and thus we have frequent lines like these:

Great God! how infinite art Thou,
What worthless worms are we.

It must be admitted, however, that Watts is at his best when he is singing of the joy of salvation and the greatness of Divine mercy, as in such well-known hymns as:

My God, the spring of all my joys,

or

Salvation, O the joyful sound,

or

No more, my God, I boast no more,

or

Go worship at Immanuel's feet,

or, finally,

Now to the Lord a noble song.

It is only when we contrast Watts with the work of his immediate predecessors that we are able to realize his true greatness.

CHAPTER VIII

ENGLISH HYMNS FROM THE WESLEYS TO HEBER

As we have just seen, it was Watts who laid the foundation of the modern English hymn-book. The work that he had started was continued by many writers, and soon his hymn-book appeared with many supplements containing original hymns by the editors of these books, and also additional hymns by other writers. It is impossible here to trace the history of these books, nor is it essential for our purpose, since many of them carry on Watts' tradition, both in style and thought. One of the best known of these writers was Doddridge, who composed many hymns, as did Watts, to suit the sermons he preached to his congregation. Some of his best hymns are paraphrases of Scripture, as in the well-known one, *Hark the Glad Sound, the Saviour Comes.* A somewhat unusual communion hymn is also from his pen, wherein the Communion Service itself is turned into a plea to the sinful to seek salvation, in the verse :

> Why are these emblems still in vain
> Before unwilling hearts displayed ?
> Was not for you the Victim slain ?
> Are you forbid the children's bread ?

A hymn by Simon Browne, one of the writers who edited a supplement to Watts, is interesting, not only for its own sake, but because it contains a

verse that anticipates the Methodist hymns on sanctification. The hymn begins :

> Come, holy spirit, heavenly dove,
> My sinful maladies remove,

and the verse referred to is the fifth :

> Lead me to holiness, the road
> That I must take to dwell with God ;
> Lead to Thy Word that rules must give,
> And sure directions how to live.

Among the writers of the period must be named Anne Steele. She was the daughter of a lay pastor of a Baptist Church in Hampshire, and from her earliest youth was fond of writing verse ; but she did not publish until 1760, when she was about forty-four years of age. She wrote under the *nom-de-plume* of Theodosia, and her hymns soon came into public use. They are characterized by great simplicity and a tenderness of emotion and have been frequently compared to those of Frances Havergal. She is important as being the first English woman hymn writer. Her nature hymns are interesting as forecasting a type of sacred verse which became more and more prominent after the poetry of Wordsworth had laid hold of men's imagination. The best of them is a long hymn which begins :

> To your Creator, God,
> Your great preserver, raise,
> Ye creatures of His hand,
> Your highest notes of praise :

Let every voice
Proclaim His power
His name adore,
And loud rejoice.

Her doctrine of the Atonement is that of the ordinary theologians of her school, as may be seen from the following verse :

Jesus the Sacrifice became,
To rescue guilty souls from hell ;
The spotless, bleeding, dying Lamb
Beneath avenging justice fell.

It is on the tenderer side, of the relation of Christ to the individual soul, that she loves to dwell, and such expressions as the following fill her pages :

Jesus, O loveliest, dearest Name,
And wilt Thou condescend
To own the bold, yet humble claim,
My everlasting Friend ?

Many of her hymns reflect the somewhat minor view of life caused by her own physical weakness, but her faith triumphs over this, especially in her hymns addressed to the name of Jesus ; and when her heart is filled with the sense of the Divine goodness her verse reaches its highest level.

The next great forward step in English hymnology was taken by the Wesleys. The details of the great movement associated with their name are probably familiar to all readers of this book, and certainly the

significance of their hymns cannot be understood without some knowledge of their particular mission, and of the controversies in which they found themselves engaged. All this is reflected in the pages of their hymn-books.

To open a Wesleyan hymn-book after reading one of those written by their Calvinistic predecessors is like passing out of a gloomy forest into the sunshine of an open hill-side. The note of joy in the Gospel and in the new-found message of the universal offer of salvation is evident on almost every page. The hymn with which the collection opens is characteristic of the whole movement :

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His Grace.

. . . . .

Jesus ! the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease ;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

. . . . .

See all your sins on Jesus laid :
The Lamb of God was slain,
His soul was once an offering made
For every soul of man.

Sometimes the hymns have a controversial aspect, even their words of joy bearing a distinct reference to those who preached a contrary doctrine, as is

the case in the following verses, which we print with the original italics that indicate their polemical purpose : [1]

Father, *whose everlasting love*
Thy only Son for sinners gave ;
Whose grace to *all* did *freely* move,
And sent Him down a *world to save*,

Help us Thy mercy to extol,
Immense, unfathomed, unconfined ;
To praise the Lamb who *died for all*,
The *general Saviour of mankind*.

Thy *undistinguishing regard*,
Was cast on Adam's fallen race :
For all Thou hast in Christ prepared,
Sufficient, *sovereign*, *saving* grace.

Jesus hath said, we *all* shall hope,
Preventing grace for all is free :
And I, if I be lifted up,
I will *draw all men* unto Me.

Arise, O God, maintain Thy cause !
The fullness of the *Gentiles* call :
Lift up the standard of Thy cross,
And *all* shall own Thou diedst for all.

It has been said that by the change of one word made by John Wesley in a hymn of Watts he showed

[1] This will be found printed by A. E. Gregory in *The Hymn-book of the Modern Church*, pp. 184, 185, and to that chapter of his book we owe a good deal in our treatment of the present subject.

the difference between Methodism and Calvinism. Watts had written :

My soul looks back to see
The burdens Thou did'st bear
When hanging on the cursed tree,
And *hopes* her guilt was there.

Wesley amended the last line by causing it to read :

And *knows* her guilt was there.

This doctrine of assurance was one of the foundation-stones of the new movement, and gave to its members that consciousness of joy to which we have already referred. This is the kind of experience of which they sing :

Stronger than death and hell
The mystic power we prove ;
And conquerors of the world, we dwell
In heaven, who dwell in love.

or again :

Strong I am, for He is strong,
Just in righteousness divine ;
He is my triumphal song ;
All He has, and is, is mine ;
Mine, and yours, whoe'er believe ;
On His name whoe'er shall call
Freely shall His grace receive ;
He is full of grace for all.

Or we may turn to the whole of the well-known hymn beginning :

O what shall I do my Saviour to praise ?

Few features are more remarkable in the difference of spirit between the Methodists and their predecessors than the fact that there are only to be found one or two hymns in the Wesleyan book relating to hell. Even in these there is little of the horror we have found in Watts ; and half of one of these hymns consists of the resolve on the part of him whose experience is given in the verses to turn from the risk of doom to accept the offer of grace. Another hymn is quite modern in its conception of what hell means, for its lines say :

Save me from death, from hell set free,
Death, hell, are but the want of Thee.

A large section of the Methodist hymns consists of those which convey the new and joyful teaching about the possibility of a life on earth in complete agreement with the mind of Christ, the so-called "holiness" doctrine which was so abhorrent to their opponents. Some of the finest hymns teach this faith, as, for example, such well-known ones as :

O for a heart to praise my God,

and

Thou hidden love of God, whose height,

and

Come, Holy Ghost, all quickening fire.[1]

[1] For other striking examples see hymns 403–417 in Wesley's Hymns edition 1876.

Verse after verse declares the same confidence, as for example :

Faith to be healed Thou knowest I have
From sin to be made clean ;
Able Thou art from sin to save,
From all indwelling sin.

It is this thought that gives us so many hymns on the Holy Spirit, another striking feature in Methodist hymnary. Nowhere is the gladness of sin overcome more finely expressed than in the well-known verses :

Love divine, all loves excelling.

Even if the old language about the " worm " is retained, the thought, if we may so phrase it, is of a " victorious worm " !

If so poor a worm as I
May to thy great glory live,
All my actions sanctify,
All my words and thoughts receive ;
Claim me for thy service, claim
All I have and all I am.

Take my soul, and body's powers ;
Take my memory, mind, and will,
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know, and all I feel,
All I think, or speak, or do ;
Take my heart ;—but make it new !

So great is this eagerness for triumphant redemption that sometimes the words almost overstrain the thought, and seem to deny all freedom of action to the individual, as in the lines :

> Save the vilest of the race,
> Force me to be saved by grace.

So convinced were the Methodists of the truth of the universality of redemption that Charles Wesley cries out on one occasion, in language reminiscent of Moses and of Paul :

> Take back my interest in Thy blood,
> Unless it streamed for all the race.

He could on occasion turn the weapon of satire against his adversaries, as in the clever and scathing lines which follow :

> The righteous God consigned
> Them over to their doom.
> And sent the Saviour of mankind
> To damn them from the womb :
> To damn for falling short
> Of what they could not do,
> For not believing the report
> Of that which was not true.
>
> He did not do the deed—
> (Some have more mildly raved.)
> He did not damn them, but decreed
> They never should be saved.

The Wesleyan Hymn-book reflects two important features of early Methodism, the first being its educational efforts. The scholarship of the Wesleys must not be forgotten, and they seldom permitted emotion to banish thought. As Gregory says, " For the most ignorant of the converts, the hymns were the one and only means of culture. They could not read, much of the preaching must have been beyond their comprehension, but the hymns, read slowly, a line at a time, soon became familiar, and the favourite hymns sung over and over again in the house, the class-room, and the family circle, became a part of their very life." [1]

Very many of Charles Wesley's hymns were based upon passages of Scripture, so that, in becoming familiar with the hymn-book, the members of the society learned their Bible also. Professor Henry Drummond was accustomed to say that Christianity, like biology, was based on living facts, by which he meant lives influenced by the spirit of Christ. This was the second feature of early Methodism that is expressed in its hymns. Living men, renewed by grace, bore their testimony to all other members of the human family, and bade them share the new-found joy. The " open-airness " of the preaching that moved the masses of England is reflected also in the hymns. Such invitation hymns as :

> O all that pass by, to Jesus draw near,
> Sinners, obey the Gospel word !

[1] Op. cit., p. 199. Readers of *Daniel Quorm*, by Mark Guy Pearse, will remember how well this feature of early Methodism is there reflected.

and

Ye thirsty for God, to Jesus give ear,

must have come as an entirely new note to the ears that heard them. Sometimes the hymns reflect the experience of those who had listened to these invitations and found the secret of the new life that had been promised to them—for example, the hymn:

Glory to God, whose sovereign grace
Hath animated senseless stones;

has reference to the transformation of the brutal colliers at Kingswood. Literally a new song was put into these men's lips by Charles Wesley, as the closing verses of the hymn show:

Suffice that for the season past
Hell's horrid language filled our tongues,
We all Thy words behind us cast,
And lewdly sang the drunkard's songs.

But, O the power of grace divine!
In hymns we now our voices raise,
Loudly in strange hosannas join,
And blasphemies are turned to praise!

If

Jesu, Lover of my soul,

is the most famous Methodist hymn, there can be no question that

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,

is the most widely-known of the hymns written by contemporary Calvinists.

Toplady was himself a Methodist in his earlier years, but later took the more conservative views of the opponents of the movement. Though he wrote other hymns that were of value as well as his famous one, we shall only treat here two hymns from his pen, not because of their excellence but because of their controversial character.[1] One is written as a prayer on behalf of the Arians, and is obviously the utterance of the distressed man at the spread of unorthodox views. He is certainly sufficiently clear in his ideas as to their fate, as the following verses will show :

Why should they die, whom Thou hast bought,
With horrid unbelief enflam'd ?
Yet die they must (tremendous Thought !)
For Thou hast said they shall be damn'd.

Thee, perfect God and perfect Man,
O let them, ere too late, confess :
Why should they slay their Lord again,
And sink to Hell as none of His ?

May they be brought that Truth to see
Thy spirit inwardly reveals ;
Convinc'd, O Saviour, that in Thee
The Fullness of the Godhead dwells !

His other hymn celebrates his renunciation of what he considered to be Arminian error, and it is in the following lines that he expresses his altered attitude :

[1] See Kinloch, *An Historical Account of the Church Hymnary*, pp. 47–52.

Blind as I was, nor knew 'twas Thou
Must work in me to will and do ;
  Nor felt my Impotence and Sin :
But Jesus claim'd the soul He bought ;
His loving-kindness found me out ;
  His Grace compell'd me to come in.

He gave me feelingly to see
My will was but to evil free,
  Deprav'd by my first parent's fall :
He stirr'd me up to weep and pray,
And made me, in His pow'rful day,
  Willing to take Him for my all.

Two famous evangelical Churchmen made their names known as English hymn-writers at the same period, the two friends William Cowper the poet and John Newton the ex-slave-trader. The Olney hymns, to which they both contributed, had an immense influence upon later Low Church and Nonconformist worship. Newton's hymns are more than ordinarily subjective and personal. He never forgot what kind of man he had been in the past, and, like Paul, the recollection of his former hatred of Him he now loved beyond all else, added a peculiarly poignant note to his penitence. This is the kind of cry that often comes from his lips :

Once a sinner near despair,
Sought Thy mercy-seat by prayer ;
Mercy heard and set him free :
Lord, that mercy came to me.

Many years have passed since then,
Many changes I have seen,
Yet have been upheld till now ;
Who could hold me up but Thou ?

What was natural on the lips of the preacher with his memory of a rough youth is strained and false when we hear it from the lips of the gentle poet. It is difficult to feel sincerity in the words of his best-known hymn, when he compares himself to the robber upon the cross, and we are never without the impression that Newton's teaching is responsible for much of both his theology and religious melancholy. It is hardly conceivable that the ghastly imagery of the hymn

There is a fountain filled with blood

should have held its place so long in English hymn-books, had it not been for three things : first, the fact that the hymn was written by Cowper, whose works were among the few volumes of poetry to be found in religious households ; secondly, because the figure of the redeeming blood had become almost a shibboleth in orthodox evangelical circles ; and, thirdly, because there are fine expressions of ecstatic religious fervour in the hymn. Such lines as :

Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die,

are not easily forgotten. Cowper's other hymns are well known and have nothing to detain us. Their tenderness and beauty of language have endeared

them to every generation, and they will abide as long as the needs they express are essential to the human soul. Newton's

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,

and several others, are also Christian classics.

A step forward in the story of English Hymns is made by Bishop Heber. Just as Watts had been greatly dissatisfied with the work of his predecessors, so Heber felt that the *Olney Hymns*, though he much admired them, were too narrow in their outlook, and especially dealt too much, in their devotion to Our Lord, in the sensuous imagery of the *Song of Songs*. He conceived the idea of issuing a new book, in which he might be aided by his friends, Dean Milman, Southey, and Sir Walter Scott. To this end he published a number of hymns in the *Christian Observer*, but his departure to India, and his death there, prevented his plans ever reaching maturity. The hymns he wrote were based mainly upon the New Testament, and the best-known among them are his Hymn to the Trinity :

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty,

his missionary hymn

From Greenland's icy mountains,

and the stirring strains of

The Son of God goes forth to war.

CHAPTER IX

ENGLISH HYMNS FROM KEBLE TO LYNCH

The next great revival in English hymnary came from the High Church in the work of those known as the leaders of the Oxford Movement. From Keble's pen came *The Christian Year*, his most famous book, a version of the Psalms, and the *Lyra Innocentium*, a book of verse for children, and also certain contributions to the *Lyra Apostolica*. The last-mentioned book was a somewhat polemical series of verses, to which Newman, Froude, Williams, and others contributed. Its main purpose was to support the Catholic Church (not Roman) in England. The writers were deeply enamoured of the ideas of authority, discipline, and sacramentalism. To them, as Scott Holland said, "Sacraments were no accidental ecclesiastical form. They were in harmony with the being of things. The world was sacramental. Nature was the symbolic utterance of the unseen God." [1]

A verse from one of Keble's contributions to the volume will show clearly the thought of the Church that was in the writer's mind :

One only way to Life ;
One Faith, delivered once for all ;
One holy Band, endowed with Heaven's high call ;
One earnest, endless strife ;—
This is the Church th' Eternal framed of old.

[1] Scott Holland's introduction to *Lyra Apostolica* in The Library of Devotion, page xliii.

In another poem in the same volume he characterizes the Athanasian Creed as :

The Psalm that gathers in one glorious lay
All chants that e'er from heaven to earth found way :
Majestic march ! as meet to guide and time
Man's wandering path in life's ungenial clime,
As Aaron's trump for the dread Ark's array.

There is little that is polemical in Keble's contributions to the volume. This we find rather in the verses that Newman contributed, as in his lines entitled *Zeal before Love* :

And wouldst thou reach, rash scholar mine,
Love's high unruffled state ?
Awake ! thy easy dreams resign :
First learn thee how to hate.

Hatred of sin, and Zeal, and Fear,
Lead up the Holy Hill ;
Track them, till Charity appear
A self-denial still.

Feeble and false the brightest flame
By thoughts severe unfed ;
Book-lore ne'er served, when trial came,
Nor gifts, where Faith was dead.

Another example may be taken from his verses on liberalism, where he considers that his opponents are half-hearted for the truth and listen only to those messages of the Divine Word that please them.

Ye heard it speak of peace, chastised desires,
Good-will and mercy,—and ye heard no more:
But, as for zeal and quick-eyed sanctity,
And the dread depths of grace, ye pass them by.

But it must not be forgotten that it was to this volume also that Newman contributed

Lead, kindly Light.

Newman's other hymn that has found a place in most modern collections is

Praise to the Holiest in the height.

It is rather an extraordinary example of the heedlessness of the doctrine implied in a hymn by those who use it, that this should appear in so many evangelical hymn-books, and yet contain so clear a reference to the Roman doctrine of the Sacrament; for the hymn, as it will be remembered, gives thanks

. . . that a higher gift than grace
Should flesh and blood refine,
God's presence and His very Self,
And Essence all-divine.

Keble's production of *The Christian Year* was a great event in the progress of Anglican hymnary, not so much because of the two selections from his morning and evening hymns, beautiful as they are, which have found a place in almost every modern hymn-book, but because of the fashion he set of providing hymns for every Sunday service and festival in the English Prayer-book. Even on the

occasions when we might look most confidently for doctrinal statements in his hymns, we find the poet superior to the theologian. As, for example, in his hymn for Trinity Sunday, he confines himself to beautiful analogies, rather than to doctrinal statements, and concludes with a prayer which simply employs three names of the Deity :

> By all the grace Thy heavens still hide,
> We pray Thee, keep us at Thy side,
> Creator, Saviour, Strengthening Guide.

The hymn on Holy Communion does indeed use similar unwarranted language to that we have already found in Watts and other writers, when Keble says :

> Fresh from th' atoning sacrifice
> The world's Creator bleeding lies,
> That man, His foe, by whom He bled,
> May take Him for his daily bread.

But at once the writer turns to a tender note of expostulation in the verse that immediately follows :

> O agony of wavering thought
> When sinners first so near are brought !
> It is my Maker—dare I stay ?
> My Saviour—dare I turn away ?

Similarly the beautiful verses on Easter conclude with a practical spiritual application of the significance of the event rather than any doctrinal statement about it.

To holy tears,
In lonely hours, Christ risen appears:
In social hours, who Christ would see
Must turn all tasks to Charity.

From Keble's time onwards we find in the Anglican hymn-books prayers for Saints' days, and in the more Catholic books hymns in honour of the Virgin Mary, as, for instance, Heber's hymn:

Virgin born, we bow before thee,

the third verse of which is in honour of the Virgin herself:

Blessèd she by all creation,
Who brought forth the world's salvation,
And blessèd they—for ever blest,
Who love Thee most and serve Thee best.

One of the greatest names in the Anglican tradition of hymn-writing is that of John Mason Neale, who was not only an original hymn writer but showed perfect genius as a translator; and his scholarly knowledge opened the treasure-houses of the Greek and Latin service-books. He thus enriched modern hymnals by his musical versions, as we have frequently had occasion to note in this book, but his work was still more fruitful in widening the whole range of the literature of hymnology and giving to it a far more truly Catholic conception.

Two special types of hymns have been the outcome of the studies of the older hymnology to which

we have been referring. These are processional hymns and metrical litanies. Many hymns are used as processionals in the churches where this practice prevails, which were not originally written for that purpose, as, for example, Thomas Olivers' hymn :

The God of Abraham praise;

but hymns like

Forward be our watchword,

were written purposely to be used as processionals.

Metrical litanies had a few predecessors, even as far back as the days of Herrick, whose well-known *Litany to the Holy Spirit* ended each verse with the refrain :

Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

The modern litanies have been written by various writers, the best-known of whom is T. B. Pollock. These litanies often imply doctrine, as, for instance, in the one that deals with the Four Last Things. We may note this verse :

From th' accursed pit of hell,
Where in outer darkness dwell
Those who to the end rebel,
Save us, Holy Jesu.

Or, again, in Sir H. W. Baker's *Litany on the Sacrament*, take the following two verses :

God of God, and Light of Light,
King of Glory, Lord of might,
Hear us, Holy Jesu.

Very Man, Who for our sake
Didst true Flesh of Mary take,
Hear us, Holy Jesu.

Admirable litanies are also to be found in a little-known but lovely collection written by J. Huntley Skrine, entitled *Hymns, Litanies, and Prayers for a Village*. He has three litanies, one entitled *A Village Litany*, another *A Litany of Thanksgiving*, and a third *For Good Things of the Country Life*. A verse from each of these will show their quality :

From the envy and the spite,
Sinful words and tongues that bite,
Evil joy at evil sight,
Lord of love, deliver.

. . . . .

Workers all that reap or plough,
Turn the soil or tend the bough,
Hew the stone, or beam, as Thou,
Praise to Thee, O Jesu.

. . . . .

Sweets of simple men's estate,
Loves of home that early, late,
On the dear breadwinner wait,
Thanks to Thee, O Father.

We may also mention here the *Te Deum of the Commonplace*, and *The Later Te Deums*, written by John Oxenham.

Modern English Roman Catholic hymnology was greatly enriched by two men who entered that Communion from the Anglican Church, Faber and Caswall. The hymns of the former are familiar far beyond the circle of his own Church, and have a certain beauty and tenderness that commend them to many worshippers, but even the best of them are apt to degenerate into meaningless extravagances, as in two verses of one of his best-known hymns :

> How dread are Thine eternal years,
> O everlasting Lord,
> By prostrate spirits day and night
> Incessantly adored !
>
> . . . . .
>
> Father of Jesus, love's reward,
> What rapture will it be
> Prostrate before Thy throne to lie,
> And gaze and gaze on Thee.

There is also a somewhat too sentimental strain, which gives an impression of unreality, about such hymns as :

> Hark, hark my soul,

and

> O Paradise, O Paradise.

When Faber writes upon doctrinal subjects there is a simplicity and clearness about his work that gives it a special quality. For example, from his

hymn on *The Unity of God* we take the two last verses, which will prove our point :

We from Thy oneness come,
Beyond it cannot roam,
And in Thy oneness find our one eternal home.

Blest be Thy Unity !
All joys are one to me,—
The joy that there can be no other God than Thee.

Sometimes we find traces of the older eighteenth-century language, as in the lines :

Have mercy on us worms of earth,
Most holy Trinity !

but in the same hymn the gift of simplicity is once more manifest and used with telling effect :

Thou wert not born ; there was no fount
From which Thy Being flowed ;
There is no end which Thou canst reach :
But Thou art simply God.

Another example may be taken of the extraordinarily simple way in which he deals with the mysteries of the Catholic faith :

Thy life is deep within Thyself,
Sole Unbegotten Sire !
But Son and Spirit flow from Thee
In co-eternal fire.

They flow from Thee, They rest in Thee,
As in a Father's Breast,—
Processions of eternal love,
Pulses of endless rest!

It is little short of marvellous to note the simplicity of language in which he reproduces the tremendous affirmations of his faith. For example:

He was true God in Bethlehem's crib,
On Calvary's cross true God,
He who in heaven eternal reigned,
In time on earth abode.

Sometimes his thoughts find an expression that is too materialistic, and to which the same exception can be taken as to hymns like Cowper's:

There is a fountain filled with blood.

We must not forget that in the use of this language the evangelical Protestant and the devout Romanist agree. Take, as an example, two verses from his hymn entitled *Blood is the Price of Heaven*:

He hangs upon the tree,
Hangs there for my misdeeds;
He sheds His Blood for me;
He bleeds,
My Saviour bleeds!
Bleeds!

. . . . .

His Blood is flowing still;
My thirsty soul it feeds;
He lets me drink my fill;
He bleeds,
My Saviour bleeds!
Bleeds!

Faber is at his best when, by unexpected little turns of phrase, he casts a new light on familiar truths, as in the closing verse of his hymn on *The Descent of the Holy Spirit*, which runs as follows (the italics are ours):

Most tender Spirit! Mighty God!
Sweet must Thy Presence be,
If loss of Jesus can be gain,
So long as we have Thee!

One other example of his art will be taken from his hymn on the Sacrament, indicating the significance of the elements to the Catholic saint:

Ah! see within a creature's hand
The vast Creator deigns to be,
Reposing infant-like, as though
On Joseph's arm, or Mary's knee.
Sweet Sacrament! we Thee adore!
Oh make us love Thee more and more!

Thy Body, Soul, and Godhead, all!
O mystery of love divine!
I cannot compass all I have,
For all Thou hast and art are mine!

Sweet Sacrament ! we Thee adore !
Oh make us love Thee more and more !

Many of his hymns, and some of them his sweetest, are addressed to the Virgin Mary. All that need here be said about these is that, for those who accept the necessity of prayers to the Virgin, no others will be found more beautiful or suggestive. Let one verse suffice as an example :

Mother of God ! thy Heart methinks,
Deepens the bliss of God ;
For He was homeless till thy Heart
Gave Him a sweet abode.
O sinless Heart, all hail !
God's dear delight, all hail !
Our home, our home is deep in thee,
Eternally, eternally.

Newman's colleague at the Oratory at Birmingham, Edward Caswall, wrote many most excellent translations of Latin hymns which have come into very general use, and at the same time composed a large number of original hymns. Some of the latter deal with doctrinal questions. One beautiful little hymn, in order to show his style, may here be quoted in full :

Wherefore so heavy, O my soul,
(Thus to myself I said)—
Wherefore so heavy, O my soul,
And so disquieted ?

Hope thou in God ; He still shall be
Thy glory and thy praise ;
His saving grace shall comfort thee,
Through everlasting days.

His goodness made thee what thou art,
And yet will thee redeem ;
Only be thou of a good heart,
And put thy trust in Him.

From one of his hymns on the Sacrament we quote two verses which show his views as to the nature of the Real Presence as conveyed to the communicant through the elements :

He who in awful godhead sits
Upon His throne on high,
This morning enter'd my abode,
In His Humanity !

He who for me, a trembling babe,
On Mary's heart reclin'd,
This morning in my heart and flesh
His Deity enshrin'd !

From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards the effect of such scholarly writers as we have just named was very manifest upon the hymn-books of the Church of England. These grew in number and importance with great rapidity. The most generally accepted have been the *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, for those who approved the new Catholic standpoint ; *The Hymnal Companion*,

with a more evangelical tradition; and, more recently, *The English Hymnal*, first published in 1906, which represents in more advanced form the Anglo-Catholic position. It is, of course, impossible to trace the history of these books, or even the main contributors to them, in these pages, and it must suffice to note one or two writers, either because of their doctrinal significance or the importance of their widespread influence.

One of these was Frances Ridley Havergal, a scholarly lady, whose tender love and devotion to Jesus recalls the verses of Bernard. Her hymns frequently err on the side of excessive sentiment, but, more than most modern writers, she has created the sense of consecration and personal loyalty to the Master through her hymns. She links together with great effect the thoughts of personal devotion and of service, as may be seen in the well-known hymns

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak,

and

Take my life and let it be.

It is said that her own favourite, that was found in her pocket Bible after her death, was the hymn:

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
Trusting only Thee!
Trusting Thee for full salvation,
Great and free.

The third verse of this hymn shows that Miss Havergal, though her Calvinism was of a very mild type, still clung to the imagery of the Sacrificial

blood, which was so common in the earlier hymns. It seems probable that the frequent recurrence of such language is due to the influence of Cowper's hymn that has been discussed earlier:

I am trusting Thee for cleansing
In the crimson flood;
Trusting Thee to make me holy
By Thy blood.

Less known, perhaps, than her hymn of Consecration already referred to, is another on the same topic, which her sister declared to be the epitome of her life. It may be given as a good example of her style and, also, as one of the best of that type of consecration hymn:

In full and glad surrender
I give myself to Thee,
Thine utterly and only
And evermore to be.
O Son of God, who lovest me,
I will be Thine alone;
And all I have and am, Lord,
Shall henceforth be Thine own!

Reign over me, Lord Jesus;
Oh make my heart Thy throne:
It shall be Thine, dear Saviour,
It shall be Thine alone.
Oh, come and reign, Lord Jesus;
Rule over every thing!
And keep me always loyal,
And true to Thee, my King.

Perhaps one of the best of this writer's hymns of evangelical appeal is the one that begins :

I gave my life for thee.

She was also the writer of some excellent missionary hymns.

Sometimes a writer is known chiefly for a single hymn, which by its popularity or usefulness has far outshone all his other compositions. This seems to have been the case with S. J. Stone's hymn, which has been appropriated by all sections of the Church, though originally written in defence of the Church of England and its Catholic faith. It is rather pathetic to remember that the enemy that was chiefly in the writer's mind was Bishop Colenso. The hymn referred to is, of course,

The Church's one foundation.

Certain verses that were added at a later time are not so well known, and one of these may be quoted here as showing that the thought of conflict had not passed out of the writer's mind even after a twenty years' interval.

For Thy true word remaineth ;
No creature far or nigh,
No friend of ill who reigneth
In hell or haunted sky ;
No doubting world's derision
That holds her in despite,
Shall hide her from Thy vision,
Shall lure her from Thy light.

Bishop Bickersteth, the editor of the *Hymnal Companion*, was also a hymn writer of considerable power. His best-known hymn is

Peace, perfect peace.

He also wrote a good hymn on the Trinity, beginning :

Father of heaven above,

and one for the Communion, which unites the thought of the service with that of the Communion of Saints. Its opening lines are :

Till He come ! O let the words
Linger on the trembling chords.

Another name to be remembered is that of John Ellerton. He was both an original writer and translator. Two of his evening hymns have become very popular, and he wrote one sad and solemn hymn upon the theme of the cry of Jesus upon the Cross, " My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me ? " The last verse of this hymn draws a practical and personal lesson from the incident :

Lord, should fear and anguish roll
Darkly o'er my sinful soul,
Thou who once wast thus bereft
That Thine own might ne'er be left,
Teach me by that bitter cry
In the gloom to know Thee nigh.

One of his hymns for Ascension Day contains a somewhat exquisite conceit which we do not remember to have noticed elsewhere :

For on this day of days 'tis given
To men to share in angels' mirth,
They joy that He is come to heaven,
And *we* that He forsook not earth.

Bishop Christopher Wordsworth was one who regarded hymns as a most important means of stamping on the memory of worshippers the great doctrines of the Christian Church. He held that the first duty of a hymn writer was " to teach sound doctrine and thus to save souls." He embodied his ideas in a volume called *The Holy Year*, and his general tendency is to follow the Greek hymn writers in a mystical interpretation of Scripture. An illustration of his method may be taken from his hymn on the Ascension, in which he thus deals with the Person of the risen Lord :

He has raised our human nature on the clouds to God's right hand ;
There we sit in heavenly places, there with Him in glory stand :
Jesus reigns, adored by Angels ; Man with God is on the Throne ;
Mighty Lord, in Thine Ascension, we by faith behold our own.

Better known and much more popular than his purely doctrinal hymns are such specimens of his poetic art as :

O day of rest and gladness,

and

Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost.

When we turn from Church to Nonconformist hymns, we are at once struck by the long and permanent influence of Watts upon the hymnary of the Congregational Churches. Very many editors of new hymn-books issued their collections avowedly as supplements to Watts' original hymn-book. It is neither necessary nor possible to follow the history of these in detail in these pages. Among the earlier writers, whose works were drawn upon for the purpose of such collections, James Montgomery is prominent, and his hymns are of a very high order. As Julian says, they are "richly poetic without exuberance, dogmatic without uncharitableness, tender without sentimentality, elaborate without diffusiveness, richly musical without apparent effort." [1] He wrote in all about four hundred hymns, including his versions of the Psalms, and some of them are to be found in almost all modern collections. One of his best-known hymns is

For ever with the Lord.

While this hymn, from its subject and treatment, may seem to modern ears much too "other-worldly" in character, it has still a splendour and strength of treatment that redeems it from the weakness of many hymns on the same theme; and in its full form, which is seldom found in modern books, its robust character is even more manifest.

[1] Julian's *Dictionary*, pp. 764, 765.

The hymn is full of the glory of immortality, but at the same time expressive of the reality of Eternal Life in the Christian's earthly experience. One verse will suffice to show what is meant :

> Be Thou at my right hand,
> Then can I never fail ;
> Uphold Thou me, and I shall stand,
> Fight, and I must prevail.

His well-known Communion hymn,

> According to Thy gracious word,

is a simple and tender expression of the memorial conception of the Lord's Supper, while the verses beginning " Go to dark Gethsemane " are a fine example of concise treatment of four critical events in the life of Christ, with their teaching and value for the Christian. It is worth while noting here that two other modern hymn writers, of quite different theological outlook from Montgomery, each wrote a striking hymn based on the Gethsemane experience, namely, James Martineau in

> A voice upon the midnight air,

and J. R. Wreford in

> When my love to God grows weak.

Montgomery has many hymns upon the subject of prayer, and some of them more hymn-like in character than his well-known verses :

> Prayer is the soul's sincere desire.

One of the loveliest and most original is that beginning :

In the hour of trial,
Jesus, pray for me,
Lest, by base denial,
I depart from Thee.

A fine, but less-known, hymn is the one he wrote to Luther's tune :

Send out Thy light and truth, O God.

He was very interested in the subject of missions, and wrote many hymns on the subject, of which the best known is

Hail to the Lord's Anointed.

Among his missionary hymns are some rather quaint ones, one, for example, being a dialogue between Christians and gipsies—probably the only hymn on such a subject ever written. It is full of beautiful poetic feeling, and is very broad in its sympathy and far in advance of its day, for the author realizes the unity of all races, as the following verse will show :

Not Nile nor Ganges gave you birth,
Your parentage and ours is one ;
Coeval with the heavens and earth,
The God who spake and it was done ;
In His great name on you we call,
He is the Father of us all.

Another of his original ideas was to write a hymn for negroes, whilst his great interest in the Moravian

Church produced several hymns for its especial benefit.

Next in importance of the Congregational writers is Josiah Conder, editor of the *Eclectic Review* and also of the first *Congregational Hymn Book*. His own contributions to this book are many of them admirable. Of those of special doctrinal significance perhaps the one on the risen and ever-present Lord is the most striking :

> O show me not my Saviour dying,
> As on the Cross He bled ;
> Nor in the tomb a captive lying,
> For He has left the dead.

In 1856 a Congregational minister, named Thomas Toke Lynch, published a little volume called *The Rivulet* as a supplement to Watts, and it contained many hymns that have since come into general use. It had additional significance because its broader theological outlook raised a strong and wide-reaching controversy. Many of the leading Congregational ministers of the period, including Drs. Allon, Newman Hall and Newth, as supporters of Lynch, were ranged on the one side, while the vigorous and often unscrupulous pen of Dr. J. Campbell, on the other, waged warfare in the pages of the religious journals. Special exception was taken by his opponents to Lynch's nature hymns, and in general it was said that they were less Christian than the hymns of the Unitarians. His chief offence in the eyes of his critics was that he did not use orthodox expressions about the person of Christ and the

Atonement. Lynch remained quiet for a time, and then published an amusing little selection of verses, called *Songs Controversial*, in which he poked quiet fun at his critics. One verse from one of these and two verses from another will display their humour. The point of the first verse is that the song from which it is taken deals with a man who will not believe in sweetness existing in a liquid in which sugar has been dissolved unless he sees the lump of sugar itself :

> For instance, sir, in every hymn
> Sound doctrine you should state
> As clearly as a dead man's name
> Is on his coffin-plate.
> Religion, sir, is only fudge—
> Let's have theology ;
> Sweetness instead of sugar, sir,
> You'll not palm off on me.

And again :

> And when this new Command is kept
> With new eyes shall we see
> New things of every kind except
> A new Theology !
>
> . . . . .
>
> Perhaps this new Theology
> Has come to do no more
> Than sweep the cobwebs all away
> From Jesus Christ—the Door.[1]

[1] For the whole controversy see White's *Life of Lynch*, Chapter VII, particularly pp. 111–117.

Lynch's hymns are marked by poetical power and cultured expression, though occasionally his verse shows curious lapses, especially into "cockney" rhymes; but we must remember this is a fault he shares with so great a poet as Keats. The doctrine of the Divine Love was the keynote of much of his song, and his evangel is couched in the newer terms that have since prevailed. Good examples of his style and thought are to be found in such hymns as:

Love me, O Lord, forgivingly,
O, ever be my friend.

and

Gracious Spirit, dwell with me.

Perhaps the most striking and original of this type is the hymn beginning:

Heart of Christ, O cup most golden,
Brimming with Salvation's wine.

Some of his hymns are of a strongly robust character, breathing the spirit of the older Puritans, as, for example:

My faith it is an oaken staff,

and

Now have we met, that we may ask.

One of his greatest hymns is the one that is in most common use:

The Lord is rich and merciful,
The Lord is very kind;

O, come to Him, come now to Him,
With a believing mind.

Another of Lynch's great teachings was that of the service of Christ in the common things of life, of which a well-known example is found in the hymn :

Dismiss me not Thy service, Lord,
But train me for Thy will.

And we may conclude our reference to him with three short verses from a much less familiar hymn :

See Him in the street,
Serve Him in the shop,
Sow with Him thy wheat,
House for Him thy crop.

Sail with Him at sea,
Work with Him on land ;
Tell Him faithfully
All that thou hast planned.

Love and learn Him more
As the common friend ;
Joys thou thus shalt store
For the happy end.

CHAPTER X

LATEST PHASES

A STRIKING feature of English hymnology during the last half-century has been the increasing number of hymn-books of all sorts issued from the press. We have already noticed the earlier features of progress in the Anglican, Wesleyan, and Congregational Churches, but all denominations have followed suit, and, both in this country and America, edition after edition of denominational collections has appeared. In the majority of instances these have been official, and generally have been issued by a committee of each respective Church. In many cases, however, individual ministers have either been discontented with the standard book, or have been impatient at the slowness of official progress, and have issued hymn-books primarily for the use of their own congregations. In some cases, as, for example, those issued by Dr. Dale, Dr. Allon, and Dr. Garrett Horder, these books obtained a wider circulation, and Dr. Horder's *Worship Song* holds a permanent position in the list of classical English hymn-books.

Sometimes the method of successive supplements has been employed as a means of bringing existing collections up to date by the inclusion of new hymns that have appeared in the interval since a former edition, or in order to include hymns with a wider theological or social appeal. In other cases, as in the

more recent Congregational and Presbyterian books, a fresh collection has been framed on better lines. The former method has resulted in the retention of many old hymns whose style and doctrine are out of sympathy with the general tendencies of modern thought. This has doubtless been the result of a tender regard for older susceptibilities, but its effect has been to make many hymn-books emphasize outworn doctrines and to render them seemingly unreal to many worshippers. Even the books edited on more modern lines have committed the same mistake out of an unwillingness to discard hymns that many of the older people cherished with affection. Another reason may have been consideration for the celebrated names of the authors.[1] For these reasons we find in quite modern collections the retention of such hymns as Cowper's

There is a fountain filled with blood.

Many hymn-books, notably those of the Unitarian denomination, have endeavoured to remove offences by altering originals. This may be legitimate when the fact that the hymn has been altered is definitely stated, but it is misleading when a change is made without any such note, as, for instance, in Dr. John Hunter's *Hymns of Faith of Life*, wherein the first verse of Toplady's hymn reads as follows :

Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee ;

[1] See Dr. F. Ballard's article " The Revision of Hymnology," in *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1927.

Let the water and the blood,
From Thy side a healing flood,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse from guilt and make me pure.

Another example is Pierpont's hymn as it appears in *The Fellowship Hymn Book*, though there the statement is made that the hymn has been altered, but the manner of the alteration is not indicated. The original closing lines of each verse run :

Christ, our God, to Thee we raise
This our sacrifice of praise.

In *The Fellowship Hymn Book* the first line reads in each case :

Father, unto Thee we raise.

The needs of varying types of worshipper have been met in another way in certain Churches. Within the Church of England various hymn-books issued in recent years—already characterized in the last chapter [1]—had this end in view.

The Presbyterian Church, on the other hand, has been gradually working towards a book that will include all its sections, and finally succeeded in 1927 in issuing a revised edition of *The Church Hymnary* embracing all the Presbyterian Churches of Great Britain (with the exception of the Free Church in Scotland) and those of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

Another notable feature has been the issue of hymn-books, of a generally inclusive character, not

[1] See p. 193.

under the auspices of any one Church. Among the most notable of these are *The Yattendon Hymnal*, edited by Robert Bridges, *Hymns of the Kingdom*, issued by the Student Christian Movement, *The Fellowship Hymn Book*, issued by the National Adult School Union and Brotherhood Movement, and *Sacred Songs and Solos*, to which special reference is made in the next chapter.

There must also be included in such a review those hymn-books specially designed for such movements as the Christian Endeavour, Y.M.C.A. and similar religious organizations.

A very great deal might be written about hymns for children, and the story of their development since the days of Watts is almost as interesting as that of hymns for adults. We have not the space here to tell the story in detail, and it must suffice for the moment to note that some sections of the Christian Church have issued separate hymn-books for children, as have also the Sunday School Union and other organizations, whilst many hymn-books, denominational and otherwise, content themselves with devoting a section of the general book to hymns specially suited to young people. Another modern development in this connexion is the large variety of books designed for the Public Schools, of which one of the finest and most complete is that of St. Olave's Grammar School. The value of the latter book is greatly enhanced by suitable quotations illustrating the ideas of the hymns, and also by the inclusion of devotional verses, not strictly hymns themselves, which are not included in the consecutive numbering of the hymn-book.

What has been noted as true of England is also true of the United States of America, where the various denominations have issued their respective hymn-books from the end of the eighteenth century until the present time. Native American writers have added very much to the general treasury of English hymns, and our more recent hymnals contain ever-increasing selections from their wealth of material. It is extremely difficult within short compass to give any adequate account of the doctrinal significance of the vast number of new hymns that have been written within the period we have briefly sketched. At best some of the main reflections of current doctrinal ideas in the hymns of recent writers may here be indicated. A hymn such as Oliver Wendell Holmes's

Lord of all being, throned afar,

reveals a more intimate and loving understanding of God than some of the earlier writers venture to declare. The doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood is constantly emphasized in such hymns as Whittier's

Dear Lord, and Father of mankind.

and Binney's

Eternal Light!

Recent studies of the earthly life of Jesus have given a different complexion to many modern hymns on the Incarnation, as may be seen in such hymns as those of Stopford Brooke:

When the Lord of Love was here,

and

It fell upon a summer day ;

or Dean Stanley's hymn :

O Master, it is good to be,

the only really good hymn on the Transfiguration. In simpler form the same effect is produced by Miss Elliott's hymn :

Thou did'st leave Thy throne.

Many hymns also interpret the Incarnation in a new way. Take, for example, Christina Rossetti's

Love came down at Christmas,

and,

In the bleak mid-winter.

Some of our best poets have written hymns of this description.

Tennyson's

Strong Son of God, immortal Love ;

Whittier's

Immortal Love for ever full ;

Palgrave's

Thou say'st, " Take up thy cross " ;

Longfellow's

Blind Bartimæus at the gates ;

are good examples.

Hymns that deal with the sacrifice of Christ emphasize its significance in a very different way from those of an earlier period. As examples let us take the following lines from Miss Greenaway's hymn, " O word of pity, for our pardon pleading " :

O infinite compassion, still revealing
The infinite forgiveness won for man
. . . . .
Teach us to know our sin which needs forgiving,
Teach us to know the love which can forgive.

A verse of one of Horatius Bonar's hymns, " By the Cross of Jesus standing," may be cited as another example :

All the Love of God is yonder,
Love above all thought and wonder,
Perfect love that casts out fear !
Strength, like dew, is here distilling,
Glorious life our souls is filling—
Life Eternal only here.

Hymns on the Holy Spirit have been much enriched by the addition to their number of Samuel Longfellow's

Holy Spirit, truth divine ;

and Edwin Hatch's

Breathe on me, Breath of God.

It may be that the many discussions on the question of immortality that took place during the latter part of the nineteenth century account in some measure for the fact that our hymnology has been greatly strengthened in the section of hymns dealing with the Communion of Saints. Among noteworthy contributions on this subject may be named Dean Alford's

Ten thousand times ten thousand,

Archbishop Maclagan's

The Saints of God, their conflict past,

and Bishop How's

For all the saints, who from their labours rest.

But it is in the direction of hymns of service, stirred by the new thought of the social interpretation of Christianity, that our modern hymn writers have most conspicuously added to the Church's praise, and widened both its scope and its appeal.[1] Thus

[1] It is worth noting that references to social duties are contained in *The Gude and Godlie Ballates*. Witness the following lines:

Princes and Kingis that sa ryall ringis,
That suld have all rewle and steir,
Do justice equall, baith to great and small;
The day of the Lord drawis near.
Erlis, Lordis, and Barrounis, hurt not your commounis,
In body, gudis, nor geir.

Mr. Elvet Lewis, one of the most recent additions to the ranks of English and Welsh hymn writers, sings :

By the toil of lowly workers
In some far outlying field ;
By the courage where the radiance
Of the Cross is still revealed ;
By the victories of meekness
Through reproach and suffering won—
Father, as in highest heaven,
So on earth Thy will be done.

Bishop How's hymn,

Soldiers of the Cross, arise,

contains many verses of a similar tenor, as does his other hymn,

We give Thee but Thine own.

Scott Holland's hymn,

Judge eternal, throned in splendour,

contains pleading lines for "the weary folk" and "the city's crowded clangour." G. T. Coster invokes in his "King of the City splendid," the Divine help to

Inspire the sons of Labour,
That honest toil may be
Their token, in life's hardness,
Of loyalty to Thee,
That Thou may'st in their hand-work
Love's heart-work see.

In *Songs of Praise*, edited by Percy Dearmer, there is a fine section on Social Service, which includes among its hymns a selection from Walt Whitman's poem

Pioneers! O pioneers!

Shelley's

The world's great age begins anew;

O'Shaughnessy's

The Music Makers;

as well as verses by Lowell, Symonds, and Blake which appear in other collections.

Not in this section of his hymn-book only but throughout the whole collection Dr. Dearmer has not hesitated to employ, whenever suitable, verses taken from the longer works of well-known poets such as Browning, Matthew Arnold and Thomas Hardy—probably the only case in which the latter has yet been drawn upon by hymn-book editors. The passage chosen consists of the verses that occur towards the end of *The Dynasts*:

To Thee whose eye all Nature owns,
  Who hurlest Dynasts from their thrones,
And liftest those of low estate
  We sing, with Her men consecrate!

The Fellowship Hymn Book is another collection that is very rich in hymns of social service.

In Skrine's *Hymns, Litanies, and Prayers for a*

Village are to be found several hymns of this character, notably his *Labourer's Morning Hymn*, *A Hymn of Country Folk*, and *Flitting Time*.

Another subject that has greatly inspired modern writers is that of brotherhood, and the implications of a truer internationalism. Whittier has several hymns bearing on this topic. There is, for instance, the one that begins

Sound over all waters, reach out from all lands,

with its chorus :

Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one.

There is also W. H. Lloyd's hymn :

It is coming, fellow Christians,
Day of Brotherhood supreme.

Another excellent hymn has for its refrain the lines referring to the essence of the Gospel message :

They are the Fatherhood of God,
The Brotherhood of man.

A well-known literary critic—J. A. Symonds—is the author of verses which appear in several modern hymn-books, beginning :

These things shall be.

Among many similar hymns we may cite among the most recent Ernest Dodgshun's

> What service shall we render thee,
> O Fatherland we love ? . . .

Harrison Hill's

> No frontiers exist in the world of true brothers;

and J. W. Chadwick's

> Eternal Ruler of the ceaseless round.

There is also a most excellent little hymn by W. P. Merrill, which has appeared in one or two recent hymn-books, and from which we quote one verse :

> Rise up, O men of God !
> His kingdom tarries long ;
> Bring in the day of brotherhood,
> And end the night of wrong.

It is only natural that the past half-century, which has seen so much progress in world-wide missions, should have added also to the number of excellent missionary hymns. The sections of our hymn-books devoted to this topic are much larger and better than they were in the older books, with the exception of that of the Moravians, and there have been experiments—such as that edited by Miss A. H. Small under the title *Missionary College Hymns*—in devoting a whole book to this topic.

Several of these hymns strike the note of the world-wide conquest of the Cross, and bear distinctly on the idea of Christian unity. Such a hymn is John Oxenham's

In Christ there is no East or West,
In Him no South or North ;

Another is C. E. Oakley's

Hills of the North, rejoice !

A third, designed more for younger people, is Basil Mathews'

Far round the world Thy children sing their song.

Another splendid hymn of the same type is Canon Ainger's set of verses, with their magnificently triumphant rhythm, each verse of which ends with a slight variant of the Scripture prophecy :

When the earth shall be filled with the Glory of God,
As the waters cover the sea.

Perhaps Cullen Bryant's poem may have been the origin of these hymns. At all events it is the earliest known to us in which the phraseology occurs :

O North, with all thy vales of green !
O South, with all thy palms !
From peopled towns and fields between
Uplift the voice of psalms :

Raise, ancient East, the anthem high,
And let the youthful West reply.

Two fine missionary hymns of recent date are one by Miss S. Geraldine Stock:

Let the song go round the earth—
Jesus Christ is Lord!

and Dr. G. Robson's

O Christ, Thy love to all the world
Is Thine eternal Cross.

We may mention further Miss A. H. Small's hymn, contributed to her own collection, beginning

In other days our fathers went,
Their King's commission holding,

and continuing later with a challenge to the present generation:

The fields they watched with wistful eyes,
Few blades of increase finding,
Are golden now—shall we withhold
The cutting and the binding?

There remains one class of hymns to be considered that is of the greatest importance, namely, those that are primarily destined for the use of children. As we have seen, one of the earliest Christian hymns on record was a children's hymn,

and all through the centuries such incidents in the Gospels as the Nativity and the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, have been treated from time to time with special reference to children. Among the classical hymn writers Theodulph of Orleans, Martin Luther, Isaac Watts, and Jane and Ann Taylor have been specially noteworthy as providing hymns for children, and the subjects already noted frequently recur. In modern times the incident of the young children being brought to Jesus has formed the subject of many hymns, in addition to the two best known—that by W. M. Hutchings :

> When Mothers of Salem
> Their children brought to Jesus,

and Jemima Luke's

> I think when I read that sweet story of old.

Both of these hymns combine the missionary motive with the thought of the welcome of Jesus to the little ones.

Two other modern hymns based on the same passage may here be named, W. H. Parker's

> How sweet is the message which Jesus has sent,
> From Salem's fair city to me,

and Marianne Farningham's

> He smiled as He stretched out His arms in glad welcome.

There are two weaknesses that attach to far too many hymns written for children, namely, an excess of sentimentality, and too great an emphasis upon the joys of heaven. The great danger of this strain in so many popular children's hymns is that it leads them in their earliest years to consider that all religion centres in the other world. Hymns that were sung in all Sunday Schools fifty years ago still hold their place in modern collections, such as Fanny van Alstyne's hymn

Whither, pilgrims, are you going ?

with its refrain,

We are going to His palace, going to the better land.

In the very latest collection of children's hymns, contained in the *Church Hymnary*, there still remain such hymns as

There is a happy land,

There is a land of pure delight,

and

There's a Friend for little children.

It is not that we would wish to exclude all hymns about heaven; for instance, the delightfully simple hymn by Mrs. Walton,

There is a city bright,
Closed are its gates to sin,

is an excellent hymn for children. Too many of the hymns also encourage the idea that to die young is something to be hoped for, or, at all events, is the natural conclusion of a Christian childhood. This is contained in another of Miss van Alstyne's hymns included in modern collections :

If I come to Jesus,
He will make me glad.

Its closing verse runs :

There with happy children,
Robed in snowy white,
I shall see my Saviour,
In that world so bright.

The purpose of such hymns may have been to remove from childish hearts the fear of death, but it appears that the harmful results outweighed the good intentions.

Of course there are many admirable hymns for children, from Charles Wesley's

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,

to the robust verses of writers like Bishop How, Mrs. Alexander, Godfrey Thring and Page Hopps.

CHAPTER XI

BYWAYS OF DOCTRINE

In modern times there has been an increasing tendency for hymns to emphasize and assist the work of Christian Union. The greater proportion of modern hymn-books are common to the whole Christian Church, and even in the sections that refer to special services in individual communions, such as Confirmation in the Church of England, or Adult Baptism among the Baptists, there are many hymns that can be equally well used by large sections of Christians who do not hold these special forms of a Sacrament. For instance, under the heading Baptism in the modern *Baptist Church Hymnal* we find such hymns as :

I'm not ashamed to own my Lord,

Fight the good fight,

Jesus, and shall it ever be,

O happy day, that fixed my choice,

O Jesus, I have promised,

Jesus, I my Cross have taken,

and,

True-hearted, whole-hearted, faithful and loyal.

Even the hymn directed to be sung during the administration of immersion is so closely based on Paul's words, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," that it could well be sung by any Christian community. There are, of course, one or two hymns that have special reference to the form of the service. Thus, in the hymn written by J. Thomas—a Baptist minister in Liverpool—occurs the verse:

> The closing waters hide
> Our former world, and we,
> Seeking through death our Saviour's side,
> Rejoice to die with Thee.

It is when we turn to peculiar denominations and to sects with very special features of their own that we get most amazing examples of out-of-the-way doctrine. It would obviously be impossible to give anything like an exhaustive treatment of this fascinating subject within the limits of this chapter, but certain examples may suffice to point the way for other students, and to show how interesting are the illustrations that may be drawn from an almost boundless field of the vagaries of human speculation.

There are occasions on which a hymn-book has been written in order to teach certain doctrines and for no other purpose. In such cases the verses themselves are apt to be very poor, but the peculiarity of the circumstances in which they were composed renders them interesting. In the year 1808 there was a little book published in Scotland by an author who signs himself J. T. It was entitled

Hymns Suited to each Question of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism. From this two selections will suffice. The first is taken from a hymn on the doctrine of election and reads as follows :

> Sinful creatures to proceed
> Till they've wrought their ev'ry deed :
> Truly he may well permit,
> And to punish such 'tis fit,
> Justice strikes for sinful act
> Where's the horror of the fact ?

The second is from the hymn on the Lord's Supper :

> In bread and wine they're looking
> At Jesu's life and sorrow ;
> Not raised above these signs of love,
> Part truth from them they borrow.
>
> . . . . .
>
> In these are they enjoying
> His freest grace abounding,
> And sweetly feel their sorrows heal
> His table then surrounding.

By contrast with this, we may take a little book that was published in Manchester without any date or name of the author, but which must have been published, judging from references in the preface, about 1880. It is entitled *Hymns and Songs for the Church of Man.* The writer takes the view that, while creeds are "a hindrance to progress, the immortal creations of the bards will outlive every

change." His book contains some excellent verses that might well have a wider use, but are mainly ethical in outlook. The following three verses will serve to show his general trend :

'Tis not a creed that makes a Church,
'Tis not a name or rite,
But loving hearts with reverent zeal
Pursuing truth and right.

Wherever man strives to be good,
Were he an only one,
There is a true and real Church,
A Church of God and man.

Make all around you happy
By doing what is right ;
Regard the rights of others
In secret and in sight.
Let love of right be real
In everything you do,
And pleasure like a sunshine
Will ever follow you.

Somewhat similar in character, but much superior in poetry, are the *Hymns and Anthems* for the use of South Place Ethical Society, published in 1890. This volume contains many hymns to be found in other collections, such as Longfellow's *Psalm of Life*, Wotton's lines,

How happy is he born and taught ;

Montgomery's

Sow in the morn thy seed ;

and Bonar's

He liveth long who liveth well ;

but in addition it contains Shelley's lines,

Life may change, but it may fly not,

Matthew Arnold's

We cannot kindle when we will ;

and Shakespeare's

O how much more does beauty, beauteous seem.

Hymns almost always furnish a popular and generally clear expression of the prominent doctrines of their authors and of the worshippers for whose use they are designed.

It would be extraordinarily interesting if, throughout the centuries, we could read for ourselves the hymns of the heretical sects which from time to time are referred to by ecclesiastical writers. We have seen at an earlier stage that the Arians wrote such hymns, and one of the recently discovered Syriac writers has a good deal to say about the evil effects, as he judged them, of improvements in Church music. He tells us that melodies and harmonious modulations create lust in the hearers, and

that St. Ephraem was bound to compose new verses in order to destroy the lustful and insane compositions of Bardaisan. Another Syriac poet wrote verses against the Greek gnostics, and Chrysostom composed hymns to correct the errors of those Arians who, by their false hymns, deceived the simple folk.

The Church, the same writer maintains, had never been able by the medium of hymns to convert a single soul, and they had only crept in through the lack of sound teachers. This writer is evidently a conservative, for he holds that the newer forms of Greek hymns had produced less reading, interpretation and preaching.[1]

We have, however, in more recent times, hymn-books produced by sects that have not survived to our own day, and they form a most interesting revelation of the ideas that governed these communities. One of the rarest and most curious is the *Divine Songs* of the Muggletonians, a curious sect that arose in the seventeenth century, led by John Reeve and Lodowicke Muggleton, who, originally Puritans, produced a curious theological system of their own, and suffered many things, including imprisonment, for their faith. Some of their followers were pilloried, imprisoned and fined, but they lingered on with their separate places of worship till nearly the nineteenth century. Some of the leading points necessary to understand the following quotations are that God is one and Himself took flesh as Jesus, while He entrusted the temporary care of the Universe to Elijah. There was only

[1] See *Woodbrooke Studies*, Vol. I, pp. 34, 35, 53, 54.

one Angel, and he fell, tempted Eve, entered bodily into her, and so Cain was born. Eve, in turn, tempted Adam, and from these twain Abel and Seth were born. Thus the world is peopled with two races, one cursed and one blessed. Reeve and Muggleton were the prophets of the new faith, and amongst their great opponents, whom they seem to have hated more than all the rest, were the early Quakers. Their hymns are generally terrible doggerel, and many of them were set to well-known popular tunes. Here, for example, is one written to the tune of "Scots wha hae." One verse will suffice :

When the Devils they did rave,
Great Reeve the sentence to them gave,
Eternal torments they will have,
And God shall never see ;
But when I their writings saw
Freedom's sword struck me with awe,
Free I'll stand, or free I'll fae (fall),
Or die for liberty.

As indicative of their attitude towards their opponents the following verses may be quoted :

What havock has been made, what woeful sad
destruction,
Among their followers here below ;
Ranters and Quakers this do know,
For which their curs'd reason's so enraged ;
That had they power they'd kill all who own,
John Reeve, the great ; and Muggleton.

These the wolves are, in sheep's clothing,
Which devour all before them,
Love public greetings, and at feasts
The parson is the head of guests.

These, the thieves are, and the robbers,
Which the Scriptures plain discovers ;
And for money they will paint
The very devil like a saint.

Extracts from the purely theological hymns are not so easy to make. The hymns are necessarily long, but the following may be taken as roughly representative of the rest :

A part of Jehovah could not set me free ;
'Twas the whole I AM that did die on a tree ;
These things seen in order has made my soul good,
And when reason would drown me, I drink Godhead blood.

The Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
We see doth blind the eyes of most ;
But prais'd be God that I do see,
Christ Jesus is that glorious Three.

First as a Father to create,
And after left that glorious state,
For to redeem elect mankind,
And so become a Son I find.

And by this third and last record,
We plainly see our blessed Lord,

His Holy Spirit forth did give
Unto great Muggleton and Reeve.

The last quotation we shall make from the book is a verse from the concluding hymn, written in 1829, the year of publication of this now rare volume. It is directed to be sung to the tune of the " The Blue Bonnets over the Border " :

Love ! love ! sons of our only God,
Why, my dear friends, should we not love one
another ?
Love ! love ! sons of our only God,
Christ is our God, and we have no other ;
Darkness God overspread,
When that His blood was shed,
Then did He enter, oh ! death, thy dark border ;
But He rose from the dead,
To break the serpent's head ;
Blest be our God Who hath done this in order.

Our next examples are taken from the hymn-book of the Glasite Church, a sect founded in Scotland in the eighteenth century. They had much in common with the Independents, but had some peculiar ceremonies of their own, and regarded all accumulation of wealth as un-Scriptural. One of their chief doctrines was that the faith which justifies consists in a simple assent to the Scripture witness concerning Jesus Christ. Their hymn-book is called *Christian Songs*, and, like some earlier books, a number of the hymns are written to the metres of popular songs, such as " Flowers of the Forest," and " Black-Eyed Susan."

The hymns have nothing in themselves that is very attractive. The following verses will give a fair idea of the style of the hymns, and also set forth their central doctrine with a side glance at those who oppose the form of the Gospel therein presented. The reference in the opening question is, of course, to the divine grace :

Who dares confine it unto them
  Who boast a will dipos'd t' embrace ?
Who boast a mind of better frame
  T' improve the influence of his grace ?

Who can by merit God prevent ?
  Let him stand forth for recompense :
But, Lord, for ever, ever grant
  Preventing grace be my defence.

Be that redemption mine for ay,
  Which from the dreadful curse doth free ;
That, with the whole redeem'd, I may
  The praise of all ascribe to Thee.

We may now turn to some peculiarities to be found in hymn-books that belong to existing Churches. Let us take, as an example, the hymn-book of the Catholic Apostolic Church, which contains many classical hymns, but also quite a number that have reference to the doctrines peculiar to their communion. The majority of the latter are from the pen of E. W. Eddis, one of the ministers of the Church. A special feature of this Church was the re-establishment of the Order of the Twelve

Apostles. This will account for the reference in the following verse, taken from one of his hymns :

Still on Thy Table let Thy Saints present
The gifts which Thou hast sent ;
Thine own twelve loaves brought back a hundredfold
To those who know Thy goings as of old.
Thy tribes shall all be seen ; Thy life within
Shall purge our souls from sin ;
And Thine anointing hand shall set us free
To stand on Zion, and abide with Thee.

One other quotation from his hymn on the separation of the Apostles is all for which we have room :

Again Thy numbered elders
Before Thy Presence stand :
And Thou again art holding
The stars in Thy right hand.
The path of life and glory
Is opened evermore ;
Thine is the key of David !
And none can shut the door.

If we turn as a contrast to such a body of Christians as the Salvation Army we find, in combination with a number of classical hymns and a very large selection of the type of hymn contained in *Songs and Solos*, special hymns written for the Army soldier. These are generally terrible doggerel, but they express the sentiments of the rank and file. Here, for example, are two verses from one of them :

I'm a soldier if you want me,
For Jesus I will fight;
I want to spread Salvation
And put the devil to flight.
God finds me ammunition,
And Blood, and Fire, and Skill;
I'm just the sort that's wanted,
I know the Army drill.

. . . . .

I'll fight to help the General,
The Officers as well,
And every private Soldier
Who fights to conquer hell.
The colours of the Army
My dying hand shall wave.
Then Jesus Christ will welcome me
In heaven among the brave.

Another runs as follows:

Are you seeking for Salvation?
Then why not come along;
You can pray and be converted in the Army;
Then rain, O rain, Good Lord send it down.

There is space for only one more quotation from this hymn-book, which contains a history of the Christian Mission which William Booth founded and which was the forerunner of the Army itself. One or two out of the long series of two-lined verses will suffice:

Of the Christian Mission we now will sing, Glory Hallelujah
To the honour of our Lord and King sing Hallelujah.

. . . . .

First in the streets and then in a tent,
With the Word of Life to the crowds it went.

. . . . .

And then we got a dancing-room,
Where hearts soon danced to a heavenly tune.

. . . . .

Out of the gutter we pick them up
And by and by with the King they'll sup.

The Salvation Army book contains several hymns derived from the collections of quaint "Spirituals," as they are now called, that originated among the slaves of the Southern States of America. Were it possible, it would be interesting and illuminating to devote a whole chapter to these outpourings of simple hearts, which frequently are the most natural hymns that are to be found anywhere in the world.

We can see their origin quite obviously in many cases, and had we not been told of it by observers we might have discovered it for ourselves. We can picture these negro worshippers, having got hold of a melody and an idea, varying them almost without limit in extemporary verse. Their doctrine may often be crude, but it is an obvious reflection of their inner experience and most profound desires. Take a simple example of their faith in the unifying power of true religion in the hymn :

Mary and Martha's just gone along
To ring them charming bells ;

which proceeds thus :

The Methodist and the Baptist just gone along.

We can see how this could be indefinitely extended. Or take another which has been rendered very familiar in recent times by the wireless and the gramophone :

I got shoes, you got shoes,
All God's children got shoes,
When I get to Heaven goin' to put on my shoes
And goin' to walk all over God's Heaven.

Then one proceeds with the same ideas about a robe, a crown, and so forth. Or take the conception of assisting in Christian service :

And we'll roll the old chariot along,
And we won't drag on behind,
Come brothers and help us to roll it along
And don't drag on behind.

Thus you can proceed with sisters, preachers, children, or anything you like.

Then there are the many hymns which set forth the pathetic sufferings of the slave people in such verses as :

Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord ;

or :

Steal away to Jesus,

which one can never listen to or sing without being moved to the depth of one's being.

It is, perhaps, natural that from America should come some of the most extraordinary examples of curious hymnary, because in that land of free and novel experiment many of the strangest sects have arisen in recent times, and from the hymn-books of Christian Scientists, to take one of the finest examples, to such curious religious communities as the Shakers, we should find many interesting illustrations. It is only here possible to deal with one of these, namely, the Latter-Day Saints, commonly known as the Mormons. From their book of *Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs* we can trace much of the history of that community and its faith. Included in the book are many well-known hymns of a strongly evangelistic flavour that might be sung by any body of Christians of a similar belief, but, in addition to these, there are hymns which deal with such special doctrines as being baptized for the dead, and others which contain references to the story of the Saints' wanderings from point to point in America until they settled at Utah. Others refer to Joseph Smith and various leaders of the community, and also to the peculiarities of this society's organization. Here is one example :

Hail to the Prophet, ascended to heaven,
Traitors and tyrants now fight him in vain ;
Mingling with gods, he can plan for his brethren ;
Death cannot conquer the hero again.

Here is another :

Come to me all ye faithful, and blest of Nauvoo ;
Come ye twelve, and ye high priests, and seventys too ;
Come, ye Elders, and all the great company,
When you have finished your work on earth come to me.
Come to me, here's the future, the present and past ;
Here is Alpha, Omega, the First and the Last,
Here's the Fountain, the River of Life, and the Tree,
Here's your Prophet, and Seer, Joseph Smith—
Come to me.

The only other selection for which we can find space is the following :

The god that others worship is not the god for me,
He has no parts nor body and cannot hear nor see.
But I've a God that reigns above—
A God of power and of love—
A God of revelation—Oh, that's the God for me.

. . . . .

The heaven of sectarians is not the heaven for me,
So doubtful its location, neither on land nor sea ;
But I've a heaven upon the Earth,
The land and home that gave me birth,
A heaven of light and knowledge—Oh, that's the heaven for me.

Both in this country and in America there exists the Association of Anglo-Israelites, who hold the

belief that the English-speaking peoples who have originated from Great Britain are representative of the lost ten tribes. They issue a little book entitled *Hymns for British and American Israel Meetings*, which contains a really admirable selection of some of the best hymns, but has a few which express the special ideas of those who make this theory their central religious conviction.

The following verses are chosen from one of these :

In Britain's Isles and Empire
  Still David's line bears sway,
God's kingdom was our fathers'
  And still is ours to-day.

His Royal Line we hail
  His witness-stone we hold,
His kingdom's coming without fail
  And will the world enfold.

CHAPTER XII

PERMANENT VALUES

Two facts about the doctrinal hymns that form the heritage of the Church will be clear to all readers of the previous pages. The first is that the great doctrines contained in any creed or confesson of faith are immediately reflected in the hymns that form part of the community's worship. The second fact is that hymns themselves are a very potent means of propagating dogmas. It is this latter aspect of the question that is the more important, since there seems to be little doubt that, in hymn-singing, worshippers frequently give expression to doctrines that they would not for a moment assent to, were they themselves to utter them in current speech. Many preachers also announce hymns which contradict the very truths they have been teaching in their sermons. Thus many hymns retained in public worship lead to insincerity and unreality, two fatal dangers to religion. Now what is the remedy to be found for such a state of things? Some would say: Banish all hymns that contradict the views held by the worshippers. This is, of course, impossible, as the majority of congregations contain people of very diverse views. It is therefore held by some that communal hymn-singing is necessarily insincere and should therefore be entirely banished from public worship. This is a drastic measure that would never meet the approval of the majority, nor does it seem to be desirable, even if it could

be reached. Churches that are based on definite creeds may satisfy themselves by securing that the hymns in their collections are in agreement with, or at least not in contradiction to, the terms of these creeds. But, save in the case of purely objective hymns like some of those in the Greek service-books, hymn writers have interpreted the creeds in such personal and individualistic ways that it is difficult to select from their number hymns that are certainly orthodox. But, as we have seen, many hymn-books seek to embrace a large number of varying forms of belief on the part of those who use them, and this renders the difficulty still greater. Further, expressions vary from generation to generation, and language that is intelligible and appropriate at one period will be out of date and misunderstood fifty years later. Popular hymns, like popular songs, easily go out of date. This may not be a serious matter if constant revision of hymn-books were always to take place, and were carried out with sufficiently drastic effect; but sometimes a great name or long-standing association keeps a hymn in use, when its ideas have been entirely outlived. Thus we see that hymn-books are frequently the last refuge of obsolete doctrines, or at best of such expressions of these doctrines as have no longer living power. It may be said that these hymns are retained on historical or sentimental grounds, and that the responsibility for using the verses rests upon the leader of the worship. This is, however, to place too heavy a strain upon the intellectual and moral courage of men and women who are frequently not best fitted for the task of selection.

There seem, therefore, only two courses open in the future to compilers of hymn-books which are designed for a wider use than that of a comparatively narrow communion. Either hymns, which are not open to the above objections, must be selected with great care, or the hymn-book must be arranged on an entirely new plan, that, so far as is known to the present writer, has never yet been adopted. If hymns open to the objection that their forms of thought and language are markedly out of date are to be retained, these should be confined to a section of the book that is clearly described as purely historical, in order that the worshippers may know they are singing a hymn entirely for its historical association and that they are in no way pledged to accept the language in which its thoughts are couched. This course might save the honesty of the worshipper's conscience, and yet enable the fine language of an earlier generation to be retained for occasional use.

The study of hymnology should be much more encouraged among the users of hymns than it has been in the past. All hymn-books should contain notes on the writers of the hymns, and on the nature and circumstances of each individual hymn, after the model of *The Fellowship Hymn Book*. It does not suffice to publish a companion volume to the hymn-book, however excellent this may be, as it does not reach the hands of the majority. The leaders of worship should also be encouraged to preface hymns by a few explanatory words when these are requisite or helpful. But this implies a far more definite and careful study of hymnology

than is at the present time prevalent. A great step forward would be taken if in all theological colleges, and in universities where theology is part of the curriculum, lectures were regularly given on hymnology. This is already done in certain American colleges, but seems to be almost an unknown feature in this country. If hymns are an essential part of Christian worship, then their nature and history should be much better understood.[1]

There are obviously certain hymns that are not correctly employed if used for general congregational worship. It would be a great improvement if these were sung only as solos, or at most by a quartette or a choir. In that case the general congregation could ponder over the words and consider the appeal which is thus made to them. There are other cases in which the verses of the hymn should be thus sung and the chorus alone rendered by the general body of worshippers. Sometimes, as the authors of *The Oxford Hymn Book* suggest, there are hymns "that may be more suited for reading than for singing." This judgment seems a sound one, and it would certainly add greatly to the devotional value of the services if this course were occasionally adopted. It would also be a gain to hymn-books if a selection of poems for this purpose were included in them. The only example known to the present writer is that of *The St. Olave's Hymnal.* As things are at present, many hymns are rendered little more than meaningless from the manner in which they are employed. Take a hymn like

Tell me the old, old story.

[1] See L. F. Benson *The Hymnology of the Christian Church*, pp. 16–22.

If it is to be employed at all it should be sung by the congregation to the preacher, but really it is a personal appeal of one individual to another. Similarly,

Rescue the perishing,

is not a hymn for general use, but should be sung as a solo, in some gathering of Christian workers. Mr. Sankey was quite right when he used his famous hymn

There were ninety and nine

as a solo, and it is much to be desired that the distinction we have been emphasizing should be carefully kept in mind and practised. It would be one way of restoring reality, impressiveness, and spiritual value to public worship.

There can be little doubt that much of the confusion in the use of hymns arises from the fact that many worshippers are more influenced by the music than the words. Just as in the case of music-hall and student songs absolute nonsense is tolerated in the words for the sake of a "catchy" and popular tune, so in hymns words that would never be tolerated in sober and careful reading are sung quite cheerfully because the melody is pleasant or exciting. The late Dr. McClure, himself a great authority on hymnology, said on one occasion: "At the present time we are suffering from two influences which have greatly hampered us in our search for the highest; *first*, the introduction from America of a host of tunes of what is called the 'Sankey type,' few of which reach even the standard of respectable mediocrity, and

many of which are hopelessly vulgar; and *second*, the character of much of the Mid-Victorian Art which, in both music and other branches, was too often content to achieve the merely pretty, or even the merely tawdry, instead of striving after the sublime and the beautiful. . . . The time is coming—and it cannot come too soon—when a Christian congregation will be ashamed to offer to Almighty God such pitiable doggerel as 'Fight the good fight with all thy might'; nor will their sense of what is seemly—to take no higher ground—permit them to sing their evening hymn of thanksgiving to a valse-tune, which is but a vulgarized version of 'Jessie, the flower of Dunblane.' . . . 'The love of beauty,' said one of my critics, 'never has saved and never can save a single soul.' Perhaps not; but it can and does make many souls better worth saving." [1]

It has been already noted that one method of saving some hymns for congregational use is by the method of alteration and revision, either by the omission of certain verses or by the change of individual words. Thus, for example, Zinzendorf's hymn,

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness,

might be made to read

Jesus, Thy grace and righteousness,

and thus an admirable hymn be employable without offence to many modern worshippers. It is always

[1] *McClure of Mill Hill*, p. 299.

a question whether such a practice is justifiable, in so far as it destroys the historical evidence of doctrinal ideas at varying periods of the Church's history. On this subject of the adaptation of hymns there are some valuable remarks in Dr. James Martineau's preface to his *Hymns for the Christian Church and Home*.

"Every adaptation," he says, "of a Jewish psalm to Christian worship affords an instance of theological adaptation; and the same rule which is applied to Dr. Watts' hymns when their Trinitarianism is expelled, Watts himself has systematically applied to David's writings in reforming and spiritualizing their Judaism. . . . In truth, the dogmatic phraseology and conceptions of every church constitute the mere dialect in which its religious spirit is expressed; and to change the technical modes of thought peculiar to any portion of Christendom into a different or more comprehensive language is but to translate the intellectual idioms of one religious province into those of another. It is simply to remove an obstruction, which the author himself cannot remove, to his influence and appreciation in spiritual regions foreign to his own, and to introduce him to the veneration of thousands to whom otherwise he must appear as a repulsive stranger." This is excellent doctrine carefully expressed so far as the revisers of hymns are concerned, but what are we to say would be the opinion of the original hymn writers themselves? Would David, Watts, and others whose verses are thus altered, accept Martineau's view? Happily we have the witness of one writer whose hymns were

frequently altered during his life-time, and we can learn what he thought. James Montgomery, in the preface to his *Original Hymns*, writes as follows: "Of the liberties taken by some of these borrowers of his effusions, to modify certain passages according to their peculiar taste and notions, he must avail himself of the present opportunity to remind them, that if good people (and such he verily believes them to be) cannot conscientiously adopt *his* diction and doctrine, it is a little questionable in them to impose upon him *theirs*, which he may as honestly hesitate to receive."

On the whole subject of the alteration of hymns there are some admirable remarks in Dr. Benson's volume *The Hymnology of the Christian Church*, Lecture Five, where he deals with the text of the hymns.

One has much sympathy with Dr. Moffatt who, writing of Cowper's hymn,

There is a fountain filled with blood,

in his *Handbook to the Church Hymnary*, says "the hymn must be taken as Cowper wrote it or not at all," and quotes Professor Saintsbury to the effect that "no finical or philistine dislike of the phraseology ought to blind any lover of poetry to the wonderful tranced adoration of the movement of this hymn." [1] This principle would not, of course, cover the language of many hymns of the past, which must remain as specimens in a museum for interest or even as warnings of how not

[1] Op. cit., p. 235.

to do things. One cannot, for example, imagine anyone to-day singing many of the hymns of Samuel Medley, published about a hundred years ago, where verses like the following occur :

> A filthy dog I am by sin ;
> A furious dog, dear Lord, I've been ;
> A greedy dog in evil ways,
> And a dumb dog to all Thy praise.

Hymns seem to serve four great purposes and it is well to keep these quite distinct from one another in our minds. Primarily, they are designed for public worship to be sung by the great congregation in adoration, invocation, and intercession to God. It may not be possible to confine all hymns, strictly so called, to this category, but essentially one cannot help feeling that this is their supreme purpose. Secondly, there are the hymns that are best employed as solos, or that in some other fashion are sung to the listening congregation. Thirdly, hymns may be an aid, and a very valuable one, to private devotion. For this latter purpose several hymn-books have been specially prepared, and it would serve greatly to raise the level of spiritual life if individual Christians used hymns much more widely and constantly in this manner. And fourthly, as this book has attempted to show, hymns are a most interesting mirror of the growth and development of Christian doctrine throughout the centuries. Their value in this respect has been hitherto very little explored, and it will be a real service if these pages serve to arouse others with more leisure, competence and

spiritual insight than the present author possesses, to investigate this aspect of the subject further, and to enrich the Church by the results of their investigations.

A SELECTION OF IMPORTANT MODERN BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY OF THE SUBJECT

This does not attempt to be in any sense a full Bibliography of Hymnology, but only a selection of a few of the most valuable books—mainly recent—that will prove helpful to the student in further investigation of that aspect of the subject treated in the foregoing pages.

Chief in importance is Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology*, which is a perfect storehouse of information on all subjects related to hymns. The student should also consult the various articles entitled *Hymns* in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*. F. J. Gillman's *The Evolution of the English Hymn* (George Allen & Unwin) goes beyond the limitations of its title, for the first seven chapters —nearly half the book—deal with the growth of Christian hymns from their origin to the beginning of the English Psalter. The book is charmingly written and its author has devoted many years to the study of his subject, so there is a competence of knowledge behind all his judgments. It may be confidently recommended as an excellent introduction to the subject. *The English Hymn*, by Dr. L. F. Benson (Hodder & Stoughton), is a more scholarly and elaborate treatment of the subject, and includes a valuable examination of American hymnology. His more recent book, *The Hymnody*

of the Christian Church (Doran, New York), consists of a series of lectures on various aspects of the subject, those that deal with the relation of hymns to Scripture, and with the contents of the hymn being the most important.

The most recent short introduction to the general subject of hymnology is also the best, being a delightfully written small volume, covering with great accuracy and interest the whole field. This is *The Story of the Church's Song*, by Dr. Millar Patrick (The Scottish Churches Joint Committee on Youth).

For the earlier Latin hymns there is nothing to equal *Christian Latin Poetry*, by F. J. E. Raby (Oxford University Press). This is a work of first-class scholarship, and covers the ground in a manner that has never before been done in England. For its full use it demands on the reader's part a knowledge of Latin.

A very valuable work is the *Handbook to the Church Hymnary*, edited by Professor James Moffatt (Oxford University Press), the first half of which consists of careful notes on each hymn to be found in the *Church Hymnary* and the second half of biographical notes on the authors and musicians. It is a thoroughly sound book.

Dr. A. E. Gregory's Fernley Lecture on *The Hymn-Book of the Modern Church* (C. H. Kelly), though somewhat older, is very important, especially for its treatment of Methodist hymns.

No student of the subject can afford to neglect the Earl of Selborne's little volume entitled *Hymns* (A. and C. Black), which was a pioneer study of the subject by a most competent authority.

The most recent book is *An Historical Account of the Church Hymnary*, by T. F. Kinloch (Heffer), which appeared too late to enable me to include references in the text. Some of his discussions on the doctrinal aspects of hymns are admirable, treating, as they do, each great period with its main features.

The reader who works through these books will have discovered where to find earlier books on the subject, of which there are a very large number that cannot here be named, but references to many of them will be found in the notes throughout this volume.

In the judgment of the present writer the best recent hymn-books are *The Church Hymnary*, *The English Hymnal*, *Songs of Praise* (all published by the Oxford University Press), *The Fellowship Hymn-Book and Supplement* (Allen & Unwin) and *The St. Olave's Hymnal.*

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